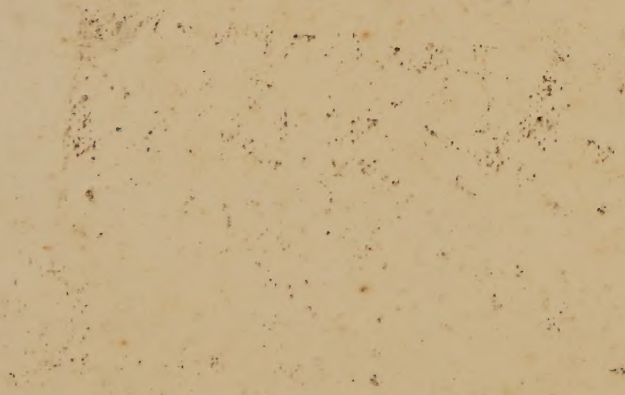
HISTORY of METHODISM



HISTORY

OF

METHODISM IN IRELAND.

VOL. III.

MODERN DEVELOPMENT.

BY

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HISTORY OF METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

1820.

METHODISM in Ireland must now be considered as consisting of two distinct organizations, under the guidance and direction respectively of the Wesleyan Methodist and Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Conferences. Each of these associations accepted the same system of Christian doctrine, engaged in the same hallowed work, and largely maintained the same discipline; yet one afforded facilities for the exercise of all the functions of a Church, and placed legislation in the hands of the ministers alone, while the other avowed itself to be an auxiliary to the churches, and admitted the laity to an equal share of power with the preachers. Although the separation was complete, the contention connected with it continued, each party asserting that it followed in the steps of Wesley, and adhered to the original principles of Methodism. Numerous addresses were delivered and pamphlets issued, with regard to this controversy, into the details of which it is unnecessary to enter.

A final and fruitless effort was also made in 1820 to unite once more the two bodies. Joseph Butterworth, Esq., visited Ireland expressly for this purpose, and, having stated his object to the Rev. Adam Averell, was told that it was impossible, as on the one side the measure which occasioned the division would not be relinquished, and on the other there was not less determination to abide by what were considered the principles of original Methodism. Mr. Butterworth then suggested a middle course, observing that if the administration of the ordinances were

restricted to the circuits to which they had been already granted, and that there should be no extension of the grant to other circuits, it ought to meet the views of all parties. Mr. Averell replied that this proposal would not be agreeable to either party, and that even if both sides were disposed to agree to its adoption, it was objectionable; for preachers who were favourable to the measure, and had administered the sacraments, when appointed to circuits to which this privilege had not been granted, would agitate the question, and there would be no end of disputation.* Thus the attempt to effect a union had to be abandoned for about half a century.

Turning our attention, however, to the important work, which aimed more directly at the spread of Scriptural holiness through the land, we find it in active operation and crowned with abundant blessing. Towards the end of 1819, and the beginning of 1820, through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Primitive Wesleyan preachers, a gracious awakening took place in the county of Mayo, during which many were brought to the knowledge of Christ, and several new preaching places obtained. One of the latter was at Knappagh, where a class of fifteen or twenty members was formed; and another was at Westport, where a school house was granted for the services. On Mr. Joseph M'Cormick's first visit to this town, he called to see a Mrs. Larminie, who had joined the Society, and on her son, Samuel, learning that a service was about to be held, he said to the preacher, "You must not go alone, or certainly your brains will be dashed out; but I know all the parties, and will accompany you." The only annoyance received proved to be from a few volleys of stones, which did not do much harm. But under the sermon preached that night Samuel was convinced of sin, and within a fortnight enabled to rejoice in the Lord his Saviour. Soon the young convert was appointed to meet the class at Knappagh, and thus commenced a career of great and extensive usefulness.†

The first Sunday school in Wexford was commenced in 1818, in the Mayor's court, or court of conscience, in Bull ring, and amongst the scholars was Robert Jacob Meyer, then a lad eight

* "Memoir of A. Averell," p. 379.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1864, p. 25.

years old.* It was, however, but an experiment, and showed the willingness of parents to send their children for religious instruction on the Lord's day. On the erection of premises, therefore, in Allen street, for parochial day schools, the Sabbath school was removed thither. The Methodists were now roused to action, and soon had a large and prosperous school, in their chapel. Much of this success was no doubt owing to the efficiency and zeal of the superintendent, Mr. Moses Rowe.†

On the Newtownbarry mission Charles Graham reports fresh trophies won from Popery for Christ, as well as the stability of previous converts. One was almost persuaded to publicly renounce Romanism, a second to escape persecution prepared to leave for America, a third was repudiated by the priest, and a fourth adorned the doctrine of the Lord his Saviour. Not only was the devoted missionary cheered by thus seeing fruit to his own labours, but also by the manifest blessing attending the efforts of John Feely and a young man from Mountrath, named William Guard, who was on the list of reserve. The former writes that when in Athy they met two Roman Catholic young men who inquired the way to Zion; one determined never again to go to mass, and the other had all his doubts removed and was enabled to rejoice in the God of his salvation.‡

Gideon Ouseley, who had been appointed a general missionary, continued his earnest and self-denying labours notwithstanding numerous and severe hardships. In a tour of fifty-two days through Munster, Connaught, and Ulster, he travelled eight hundred miles. On one occasion, in the county of Limerick, having taken his stand near a butcher's stall, the stones began to fly, and some of them struck the servant of God, cutting him severely, and compelling him to retire to the house where he lodged. Having washed off the blood, he returned to the same place and resumed the service, but only to meet with a similar reception. The ringleader of the rioters then exclaimed, "Let us not kill him," and seizing a pig, held it by the tail, while its screams were so loud as to drown the voice of the preacher. At length the poor animal became exhausted; then Ouseley began

* Son of Mr. Rudolphus Meyer, *vide* ii., p. 233.

† Unpublished autobiographical sketch of Rev. R. J. Meyer.

‡ The Apostle of Kerry, pp. 208-10.

again, and, suddenly stopping, called the butcher to him and said, "My good man, the Lord will extort a cry from you as loud as that of the pig." In a few minutes the man fell to the ground, and uttered a most unearthly scream, which continued for a considerable time. All present thought he was possessed with an evil spirit, and several strove to raise him, but could not. The priest was then sent for, and whip in hand, laid on with all his might, but to no purpose. The wretched man continued to roar aloud until exhausted, and was then dragged into his own house. None afterwards would venture to go near him or purchase at his stall, so he had to remove to another part of the country, where both he himself and his family became Protestants.*

It was probably during one of these tours of the devoted evangelist that the following scene occurred:—"Let me picture him in the streets of Kilrush," says the Rev. William Gorman, "with my uncle's head for an improvised reading desk, and his body a shield against possible stones; see him next day taken across the lordly Shannon, seven miles to Tarbert, in the same friend's boat, and when the keel touches the beach leaping out, falling on his knees on the shingle, and saying, 'I take Tarbert in the name of the Lord Jesus.' And then, singing a hymn, he marches towards the town, and some of the Enniskillen dragoons, stationed in the fort, come out at the sound of the song, and escort him to the spot where he speaks as he loved to do of 'the disease and the cure.'"

One evening in March, a little before sunset, Ouseley arrived at Ballyjamesduff, took his stand in the street and began to preach. Soon almost all the inhabitants of the town surrounded him, he continued his discourse for some time, and many Romanists, taking advantage of the shades of evening, came to hear, and listened with devout attention. He then published for a service in the chapel, to which numbers of the Catholics requested to be admitted, and the Lord was present in blessing. Ouseley says, "It was a most delightful and solemn season. Surely the Master of assemblies was there to melt down obdurate hearts, as was evident from the copious tears which silently flowed from many eyes."

On one occasion this devoted missionary preached in the market

* Arthur's "Life of Ouseley," p. 233.

of Lurgan to a great multitude of both Protestants and Roman Catholics, who seemed "as if they were fastened to the ground, and, being bathed in tears, sobbed and cried and prayed together, as of one heart and soul." Ouseley, however, did not soon get over the effects of a cold caught in connection with this service, and was therefore obliged to retire to the sea shore to try bathing as a means of regaining health. Dunleary was chosen as the place of his temporary retreat; but even here, when rest was of great importance, he could not remain without doing something for his Master. He preached four times each week, witnessed some signal conversions, and formed a class of fourteen members, whom he committed to the care of the superintendent of the Dublin circuit. Resuming his general labours, he preached in Irish in the open air at Trim, to people who appeared electrified, and again in the court house, where many Romanists and almost all the Protestant inhabitants assembled to hear. Continuing his earnest efforts through the country, he had the satisfaction of seeing many sinners awakened and brought to a knowledge of the Saviour. "Thank God," he writes, "there is a good work going on in several parts, in spite of every opposition, in our bigoted and benighted land."*

At this period a Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association was formed in the metropolis, and among its leading members were Claudius Byrne, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, and Abraham Mason. The meetings were held weekly, in Whitefriar street chapel, and proved a means of much advantage.

One of the Methodists in the city was a citizen named Richard Haughton, who had been eleven years a member of the Society. He was poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith and the honoured instrument of leading many to Christ. Once, on inviting to the class in which he met a number of boys, the youngest, an orphan lad of ten years of age, was much impressed with the kindness of the good man, accepted the invitation, and thus received his first religious impressions. That youth was Samuel M'Comas,† who for many years subsequently occupied a

* Reilly's "Memorial," pp. 237-39.

† A son of Mr. Thomas M'Comas, a native of Drumsna, who was for several years a devoted and useful leader in Dublin. He was a faithful visitor of the sick, especially those in the Lock and other hospitals, and died in peace about the year 1811.

prominent position in the Dublin Society. Richard was a fine specimen of an old Methodist, humble, simple-minded, and very zealous, with high moral principle, albeit he was a little peculiar. As long as he was able to ascend the stairs he attended class, and always carried an old umbrella, which in the narrative of his religious experience he would strike on the floor, exclaiming, "Firm footing. Christ is precious," and then repeat the verse of the hymn beginning, "Now I have found the ground wherein." One morning when his leader said, "Richard, how does your soul prosper?" he replied, "A hard week. I have been like a man rowing a boat against the stream; had I not been able, by God's help, to use both hands and two oars, I would have been carried back instead of forward." He greatly loved the ministers and the ministry of the Word, and generally would say of the last sermon he heard it was the best. He appeared to go to the house of God with a good spiritual appetite, and never went away disappointed. Having a great dislike to evil speaking, on one occasion he was much grieved by a person who made certain charges against a professing Christian, and said somewhat sharply, "Have you nothing good to tell me? Why, that poor fellow is only going to school, and when he has finished his education as a Christian he will make none of these mistakes." Haughton was also a most liberal man, often in cases of distress giving away his last shilling.*

Mr. George Burrows was stationed on the Irvinestown circuit, and on applying for a subscription to Captain John Irvine, who then resided at Gublusk, and had been high sheriff of Fermanagh in the previous year, he not only complied with the request, but also invited the itinerant to return and preach in an adjoining school house. This led to the formation of a society here, of which Captain Irvine was a member, and in all the concerns of which he took a lively interest. About twelve years afterwards he erected at Rockfield a neat Wesleyan chapel, which continued to be used by the Society until after his death, when it was taken out of their hands, as unfortunately no lease had been made or was forthcoming.

In Belfast the Primitive Wesleyans held their services in a large room, part of the premises of Mr. William Campbell, until

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1860, pp. 79, 80.

they succeeded in erecting a preaching house in Academy street, which was opened this year by the Rev. Adam Averell. This was the fourth Methodist chapel built in this town.

A Sunday school was established on April 30th, in Donegal square chapel. It met from seven till nine in the morning, and from three till five in the afternoon. The superintendent was Mr. Samuel Tucker,* and the secretary Mr. Alexander Moncrief. There were seventy-four children present on the first morning, and one hundred and forty-two in the afternoon. In four weeks the numbers rose to four hundred.

Daniel Macafee, to whom reference has been made, resided in the neighbourhood of Belfast. Two years previously he had published "An Essay on the Primeval State and Fall of Man;" and now he brought out "A Rational and Scriptural Investigation of the Doctrines of Original Sin, Absolute Predestination, and the Foreknowledge of God," being a series of letters addressed to the Rev. John Paul,† in reply to a portion of his "Defence of Creeds and Confessions." These writings of Macafee display not only his thorough mastery of the Calvinistic controversy, but also those keen and vigorous mental powers for which as an expounder and defender of Divine truth he subsequently became so remarkable.

At Dromore, John Ross, deeply impressed with the needs be for more suitable premises for the worship of God, had set to work, secured a site, collected subscriptions, and at length, on the quarterly love feast day of September, 1815, had the satisfaction of seeing the chapel opened for Divine worship. Although the collection was only £1 11*s.* 6*d.*, the congregation was so large that many could not get admission. The building was a plain structure, with forms and a desk; and when funds were forthcoming pews and a pulpit were added. The Rev. William Kidd preached the re-opening sermon, having selected for his text, "And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose."

The Society soon received valuable additions to its membership, including William and Richard Derry, who proved pious and useful leaders; John Saul, who entered the itinerancy in 1826, and continued to labour actively and faithfully for forty-two years;

* A grandson of William Tucker, one of the early Methodist itinerants.

† A minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

Robert Frazer, previously a Unitarian, but subsequently for many years an able local preacher and a liberal supporter of Methodism; Henry Price, who entered the ministry in 1823, a man of clear and powerful intellect, transparent sincerity, deep humility, and lofty piety; George Jamison, who had been a Presbyterian, and who, shortly after the conversion of his wife, sought and found the blessing of pardon, and for nearly forty years was an exemplary Christian and useful leader; Thomas Stevenson, "an Israelite indeed," who for more than twenty years with fidelity and acceptance sustained the offices of leader and local preacher; Robert Hill Lindsay, of Ashfield, who entered the itinerancy in 1827, and laboured with acceptance and success for thirty-six years; and Samuel Cowdy, who began to travel in 1832, and for more than five-and-twenty years preached the Gospel with soul-converting power in several of the most laborious stations in Ireland.

One Sunday Mr. Ross preached a sermon to females, and amongst those present was Esther Craig,* of Ballynaris, who up to that day had been a mere formalist, but was then awakened to a sense of her true condition, and led to seek the Lord until she found Him. She had been very fond of dress, but on her conversion laid aside all her ornaments, and became exceedingly plain in her attire. However, one day Mr. Ross met her, and said, "Now, Esther, take care lest there be as much pride under your ribbonless bonnet as under many a one adorned with ribbons." This proved "a word in season," revealing to the young convert what might otherwise have greatly hindered her growth in grace and influence for good. On becoming a Methodist all her friends, except one aunt, disowned her, but such was her consistent Christian conduct that in time not only did all this bitterness and bigotry cease, but she was regarded with the greatest respect by those who had despised and persecuted her.

At this time there were in the district of country west of Armagh but three families that received the Wesleyan ministers: George Beaumont, of Benburb; John Armstrong, of Killymaddy; and Robert Oliver,† of Mullantur. George Beaumont was familiarly known as "the Bishop," a blunt, outspoken, godly, and faithful leader, who was spared long to welcome the preachers to

* Subsequently married to Robert Oliver of Mullantur.

† Father of Rev. James Oliver.

his dwelling and to work for Christ. John Armstrong was a most original, pious, and consistent brother. One day as he drove into Armagh market another Methodist who was with him said, "Since I got converted, I often wondered that when I was going headlong to the devil you did not take hold of me, and arrest me in my mad career." "Well, brother," replied Armstrong, "I know I have been very unfaithful, but it's not easy to plough in frost." On another occasion, at class meeting, in narrating his experience he said, "I have had many ups and downs since my conversion, but, thank God, I have had no outs and ins." He passed to the home above about twelve or fifteen years ago.

Mr. Lanktree, who was on the Ards mission, says that he and his colleague, Robert Wilson, had "a good and happy year." It pleased God not only to give them seals to their ministry, but so to confirm and establish those who had believed that societies were properly organized, and arrangements made for the formation of a new circuit, of which Donaghadee was the head. It having been stated that Grey Abbey was a very wicked place, and that many of the inhabitants were infidels, Mr. Lanktree resolved to preach there, even if it should be at the peril of life. Large congregations assembled, and no apparent opposition was raised; but owing to the want of suitable accommodation, the services had to be abandoned.*

The Rev. Jonathan Crowther, the President of the Conference, the Rev. Joseph Benson, and the Rev. James Wood were appointed to visit Ireland. Mr. Benson, however, being prevented from coming to this country, by affliction, his place was supplied by the Rev. William Myles; and these honoured ministers arrived in the kingdom some time before the opening of Conference. Mr. Wood visited a few societies in the north, and Mr. Myles some in the south, while the President continued to labour in the metropolis. The ministrations of these brethren proved highly acceptable, leaving "a pleasing remembrance of their wisdom, piety, and usefulness."

The Wesleyan Conference met on July 7th, with the Rev. Jonathan Crowther in the chair. Thomas Ballard, who had supplied the place of William Wilson on the Tanderagee circuit, was

* Lanktree's "Narrative," pp. 309, 310.

received as having travelled twelve months.* Four deaths were reported: William Wilson, who had faithfully laboured for six years in the West Indies and Bermuda, and then with a shattered constitution returned home to die; John Bredin, a veteran of the cross; Samuel Alcorn, whose end was peace; and John Price, who sixteen years previously had become a supernumerary, but in old age and feebleness evinced all the burning zeal of his earlier years, labouring to his utmost to spread the knowledge of that Saviour whom he loved and whom it was his delight to serve. The day before he died he walked with the pains of death upon him five miles, to his appointment at Enniskeen. When the congregation assembled he requested that they would come into the room in which he lay, raised himself in bed, prayed with great fervour, shook hands with each person present, lay down, and spoke no more until he joined the redeemed in heaven. Such was the esteem in which he was held by even the Roman Catholics that several of them attended his funeral, and requested permission to assist in carrying "the good man," as they called him, to his grave.

Robert Smith, who had travelled thirty-two years, withdrew from the Connexion, and subsequently received an appointment from the Primitive Wesleyan Conference. As, however, his withdrawal did not take place until four years after the division, it is probable that there were other reasons for the step than dissatisfaction with the decision on the questions of the ordinances.

In regard to the condition of the country, it is said, in the Address to the British Conference, "The state of Ireland at present is deplorable. The decline of commerce, depression of trade, want of employment, and latterly the sudden failure of almost all the banks through our southern districts have reduced the country to a condition of almost unparalleled distress. Our dear people, in common with others, have felt the pressure, in consequence of which our financial concerns are more than usually depressed." To meet the deficiency thus referred to, amounting to £1,860, the preachers subscribed £1,046; and as upwards of £800 was still required, it was resolved that a collection should

* Mr. Ballard had also in 1817 supplied the place of Mr. Michael Murphy on the Aughrim circuit, and in 1818 the place of Mr. Sterling in Tullamore.

be made in all the circuits, equal to tenpence per member. The spiritual state of the kingdom, however, was more cheering. "Through the year," it is said, "we have witnessed a blessed work, insomuch that notwithstanding the disappointment of our hopes in some instances, combined with the depopulating influence of disease and emigration among our people, we have added, upon the whole, upwards of twelve hundred members; and when we consider the grace of God which has been manifested in this accession to our societies we cannot but rejoice therein, as a special token of the Divine favour."

The Conference approved and recommended to the people the plan proposed by the Dungannon Committee for establishing a Building and Chapel Fund, in order to the relief of chapels and dwelling-houses then in embarrassed circumstances, and to assist in the erection of others. The plan here referred to provided, amongst other things, that a committee should be appointed "composed of ten preachers to be chosen by the Conference, and of ten brethren, not being travelling preachers, who should be chosen by their respective districts," out of persons nominated for that purpose by the circuit quarterly meetings in March. This marks an important stage in the development of Methodist organization, as thus the right was given, for the first time, to quarterly meetings to nominate, and to district meetings to elect, lay representatives as members of a Connexional Committee.

Leave having been given for the erection of a new chapel in Dublin, and Messrs. Mayne and Mackey deputed "to collect through the kingdom" the necessary funds, John Summerfield and John Holmes were taken from the list of reserve to supply their places in the metropolis. An address was also issued to the "Members and Friends of the Methodist Society in Ireland," gratefully acknowledging the spiritual prosperity vouchsafed, calling attention to the serious financial difficulties encountered, and earnestly pleading for assistance.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference met on July 12th. John Stephenson, of the Castlebar circuit, and William K. Digby, of Athlone, were received on trial; but the latter, on account of ill health, was unable to take his appointment, and in a few months entered into the more immediate presence of his Lord. It was reported that there was an increase of six hundred and twenty-one

in the number of members, that the ministry of the preachers was regularly attended by overflowing congregations of persons of various religious persuasions, and that there was among Protestants in general a growing interest in the cause, while several new preaching houses had been erected, and the state of the funds presented "a truly pleasing aspect."

John Armstrong was appointed with John Nelson to the Armagh circuit, and gives a racy and characteristic description of his reception at the first of his country stopping places. On knocking, the door was opened by a plain but neatly dressed old woman, who had entertained the preachers for half a century, and now inquired of the stranger who he was. "I am the new preacher, ma'am," said Mr. Armstrong; "have you any dinner for me?" "I had some two hours ago," she replied; "but it is spoiled waiting for you; and now, young man, let me give you some advice. When you go to an appointment always go in time, and don't keep the people waiting for you." "Thank you, ma'am," said the youthful itinerant. "When you have finished your dinner," the matron went on to say, "go out, visit the neighbours, and gather a good congregation for the evening." "Thank you, ma'am," again replied the preacher; "is that all?" "No; after preaching go early to bed, and then you can rise early; for it is a shame for a preacher to be late in the morning, keeping from their work people who can do nothing until he is gone." "Thank you, ma'am; anything else?" "Yes; when there are children in the house be kind to them and teach them verses of the Bible and hymns; get them to love you, and then you will do them good." "Thank you, ma'am; what more?" "When that is done leave the house, that you may be in good time for your next appointment." The young preacher again gratefully acknowledged the interest thus manifested in his success, and in subsequently narrating the incident would add that he had been profited all through life by the sound and homely advice thus given.

At Comber the congregations had become so large as to require the erection of a chapel. The grant of a suitable site was therefore secured from the Marquis of Londonderry, the permission of Conference obtained, and valuable help given by the local clergy and laity of different denominations. In Bangor also appearances were so promising that, being deprived of the rented place in

which the services had been held, it was proposed to build a house. This project was greatly encouraged by Mr. John Johnston, of Lurgan, who with his family lodged there. Although Colonel Ward, the lord of the soil, having no sympathy with Methodism, would render no assistance, an eligible site was purchased. The congregations in the town were good, and were assisted by members of the New Connexion Society, who subscribed liberally to the new project.*

The Wesleyan Society in Athlone had been very prosperous until rent and torn by the division, so that only one old man and a few soldiers were left. The preachers, however, continued to visit the town occasionally, and a friend who lived about three miles distant received them into his house. This year, however, a discharged soldier who was a Methodist, having obtained a situation in the garrison, invited the servants of God to stop with him, and the cause began to revive again.†

Leave of Conference having been obtained, a new preaching house was erected in Roscommon. Thirteen years previously Mr. Michael Shera ‡ had settled in the town, and at once invited the preachers to his house, where services were regularly held once each fortnight until now, when the present chapel was erected, chiefly through the Divine blessing on the labours and liberality of this devoted Methodist.§

Mr. Summerfield's ministry in Dublin was wonderfully owned of God, especially to a number of young men, between whom and the youthful preacher a friendship sprang up which was influential for good on their character, and the memory of which was very precious. Mr. William H. Baskin was one of this noble band, probably the last survivor of them, and to his latest hour the recollection of some of the marvellously beautiful sermons delivered more than half a century previously was as fresh as if only heard the day before. At the British Conference held at Liverpool, Mr. Summerfield met the Rev. John Emory, and this interview, together with the state of his health, led him to resolve to go to America, where he arrived early in 1821. His reputation

* Lanktree's "Narrative," pp. 309-12.
† Unpublished Journal of the Rev. G. Burrows.
‡ A son of Mr. Caleb Shera, of the county of Leitrim.
§ *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1884, p. 277.

there was soon made. Charmed, thrilled, subdued, and carried away under the overpowering influence of his seraphic eloquence, many said, "He is an angel;" and others, "He talks like an angel direct from heaven;" but his course was very brief. On June 13th, 1825, while the dew of youth was still upon him, the end came. One of his sisters was with him, impressed on his pale, wasted cheek the last kiss, and said "Good night." "Good night," replied Summerfield, quietly went asleep, and awoke in heaven.

Mr. Thomas Waugh was now in Bandon, where he soon became exceedingly popular and the work greatly prospered. Amongst those converted to God and added to the Society were Messrs. Thomas Beamish, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, Henry Belcher, afterwards stepson-in-law of Mr. Waugh, Robert Edwards, William Kingston, and Henry Cornwall, for many years leading office bearers on the circuit and large contributors to its funds. The circumstances which led to the conversion of the last-mentioned are worthy of notice. There was a most devoted young lady, Miss Biggs, a Methodist, who gave very generously to the poor and was greatly respected in the town. One Sunday evening she put her hand on the shoulder of Mr. Cornwall, then a gay and thoughtless youth, and said to him, "Harry, come with me." He consented, and thus for the first time entered a Wesleyan chapel. During the following week, Miss Biggs, through visiting some poor people ill with fever, caught the infection and died. This so deeply impressed the mind of Mr. Cornwall that he resolved to abandon his former worldly course, join the Society, and give his heart to God, which proved the commencement of a career of protracted and extensive usefulness.

Mr. Waugh's great readiness and power in debate stood well to him at a public meeting held towards the close of the year, in the Court house, Bandon, for the purpose of establishing a branch of the Bible Society, and during the course of which the project was opposed by two able speakers, one a priest, and the other a classical teacher. Francis, first Earl of Bandon—son of the Mr. Bernard mentioned by Mr. Wesley on his visit to the town in 1787—was in the chair; and the speakers in favour of the Society were the Rev. Joseph Jervois, Rector of Ballymodan, and his curate, the Rev. Henry E. Sadlier. Neither of these ministers was remarkable for either religious zeal or platform ability, so

they were easily overcome. Then, amid a scene of wild disorder and confusion, Mr. Waugh sought and obtained permission to speak, and in a masterly address exposed the sophisms of the opponents of the Bible so completely that the priest and his helper fled. When Mr. Waugh concluded there was tremendous applause; many, including the noble chairman, rose to their feet, and waved their hats and handkerchiefs with the greatest enthusiasm. At the close of the meeting the Earl of Bandon, as an expression of his respect, offered to obtain for the champion of the truth the commission of the peace; but on ascertaining that such an honour would not be in harmony with the position of the preacher, and that he was raising money for the erection of a new chapel, his lordship sent a subscription of £30 for himself, and £5 each for his son and two daughters. Thenceforward Mr. Waugh was regarded with special favour at Castle Bernard.*

During Mr. Waugh's superintendence of the circuit, William Welply,† of Bengour, was united in marriage to Martha Orr, of Inishannon, a union that proved the means of much and lasting good. Mrs. Welply at once took a decided stand for Christ and His cause, and in conjunction with her husband's aunt, Mrs. Hosford,‡ familiarly called Aunt Pattie, a very devoted woman, laboured earnestly and successfully to extend the Redeemer's kingdom. She was soon appointed to the charge of a class, and in it, her large household, and her extensive social circle exerted a powerful, life-long, and salutary influence, which may be traced to the present day.

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* *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1883, p. 579.

† Youngest son of John Welply, *vide* i., p. 368.

‡ Wife of Benjamin Hosford, *ibid.*

CHAPTER II.

1821.

At the period now before us not only were strenuous efforts made to pass the Catholic Emancipation Act, but increased vigilance was observed by the priests to prevent their people forsaking the Church of Rome. Thus on January 21st, 1821, Mr. Graham wrote from Newtownbarry, "I find we have no other way of getting at Roman Catholics but by preaching in fairs and markets. They are watched very closely by their clergy, who leave nothing undone in order to keep them from hearing us. They even prevent servants from going to live in Protestant houses, especially where we lodge. But in the markets we have a full hearing. The work of the Lord is prospering in convincing, converting, and sanctifying power. I cannot but admire the fortitude of the converts from Rome. Two of them went lately to warn their friends; the mother of one of them struck her with the tongs and blackened her arm, and the other was near being murdered, but escaped with life." Again, on March 24th, the same devoted missionary writes, "I am still preaching to the Romanists, and, notwithstanding all the prohibitions of their clergy, have a hearing. 'Tis of the Lord I am left so long in this country. Before I leave, it would appear the Lord will raise up young men who will more than fill my place. Two of these took their station by my side on the last market-day of Gorey. It appeared formidable to see three men set in battle array, preparing to open a battery on the ramparts of Babylon; and it was a glorious time. Many rejoiced to see it. After we had done speaking, a Catholic came to one of the young men and said, 'I have heard the truth, and will embrace it.' We shall soon have him amongst our people."

A commendable but fruitless effort was made by the Rev. Matthew Lanktree to effect a union of the New Connexion and the Wesleyan Methodists. On April 3rd he wrote to the Con-

ference of the former, saying that in consequence of the good feeling which had for some time been manifested between the two Societies in this country, he had been induced to request some of the principal members of each to meet, which they did in Bangor, on March 19th, and unanimously resolved, "That the brethren of the New Connexion be requested, at their next yearly meeting, to deliberate on the importance of a reunion of both Connexions, according to such principles as the wisdom of united counsels should decide to be most honourable to the Christian cause and the lasting unity, edification, and increase of both the Societies." In accordance with this resolution, Mr. Lanktree earnestly and respectfully urged the Conference to give a favourable consideration to the subject, which led to a meeting of deputies of each body on May 20th. As, however, the New Connexion brethren insisted on the admission of the laity into Conference, as an indispensable condition of union, and the Wesleyans were not prepared to concede this, the negotiations led to no practical result.

An interesting picture is presented of the state of the New Connexion in Bangor. There were two morning classes, two preaching services, and a school each Sabbath. The chapel had an unceiled roof and earthen floor, with neither fireplace nor stove, yet it was usually well attended in the morning, and crowded in the evening. In summer there was out-door preaching, —now on the Kinnegar, the favourite promenade of visitors, again on the quay, the loitering-place of seamen, and then on the hill, the dwelling-place of the fishermen. Amongst the active and useful members of the Society was the only son of the Rev. John M'Clure, William, who had been convinced of sin about two years previously, and taking his Bible, had retired to the sea-shore, where, amongst the grey old rocks, he had wrestled in prayer until he obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins—a blessing which he never lost.

Another of this devoted band was a joiner named Bob Neill. Naturally shrewd and observant, he was well acquainted with the Word of God, and could use it with telling effect, in either "wounding the heart of the King's enemies" or in strengthening the feeble-minded. Few scoffers would venture within the range of his artillery, and if they did they were sure to go limping all the rest of their life. One day, on William M'Clure calling to have a

chat with this remarkable man, he heard very earnest talking. Pausing a moment, lest he should disturb the speaker, and looking in, he could see no second party, and heard the words, "You are a liar!" uttered with startling force. Before he had time to ask any question, Bob stamped his foot on the ground, and again vehemently exclaimed, "You are a liar! ye'll get nae ither answer frae me to the day o' my death." On the visitor inquiring to whom Neill had been speaking, he replied, "To the old leeing devil, to be sure. His impudence is awfu'; he has just now been whispering into my ear, 'Bob, you are deceivin' yoursel',—yes, and ither folk as weel; your heart, mun, was never changed by the grace of God; it's a wind; yir auld heart is tilling ye a pack o' stuff about regeneration; why, you are just the same mun ye iver war, only you can manage to skin things over and mak' them look nice.'" Then, with a look of triumphant indignation, he continued, "The black auld beast has telt me that same story a thousand times before—ay, an' troubled me often and sair in this very thing. At first I used to reason wi' him; but I'm wiser noo, for the devil stops at naething if ye only just let him talk wi' ye; but nae mun should ever attempt to reason wi' the fether o' a' lies; for what can onybody mak' o' a liar? So for years past, whenever he speaks to me, I at once make him to understand that I ken wha's there; and as soon as he sees he's found out he's aff like an ill-meanin' beast wi' his tail amang his feet." *

About twenty years previous to this, Mr. Joseph Morrison had preached at Ballyboley, near Ballyclare, where a Mrs. Gawn had received him into her house, and was herself led to the Saviour, but seems in some measure to have returned again to the world, so that no footing was obtained by Methodism in the townland. Now, however, on being visited by a distant relative, who was converted, he was asked to hold a prayer-meeting, and the Spirit so applied the word spoken at this service that several were convinced of sin, formed into a class, and subsequently realized peace in believing. The leader was a grand old Christian, named Joseph Simpson, who came every Sunday morning for the purpose, from White Park, a mile and a half distant. One of his reports to the quarterly meeting was, "Sixteen members, sixteen believers, and sixteen shillings." Many petty persecutions and

* Memoir of the Rev. W. M'Clure, pp. 32—48.

annoyances were suffered, as was usual in such cases; but the members by their consistent conduct eventually disarmed hostility and prejudice. The good woman who had been the instrument of introducing Methodism into this locality had the unspeakable joy of seeing nearly all her family brought under the saving power of Divine grace, while the class formed in her house has stood the wear and tear of more than half a century. One of the first members was John Elliott, long known as a most devoted and successful leader in connection with Frederick Street Chapel, Belfast. A considerable number also of the members emigrated to America, where they have swelled the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

At Ballycor, in the same parish, a Mr. Love entertained the preachers, and fitted up a house for a preaching-place and Sunday-school. Mr. Edward Tucker, of Belfast, having been invited to conduct a service here on a Christmas Day, consented, and preached from Proverbs xi. 30. Amongst those present was a young man, named James Riddle, a Covenanter, who thought as it was not a Sunday, he might gratify his curiosity to hear an unordained preacher, without committing a sin, and thus was led to hear the Gospel, which proved the power of God to his salvation. He joined the Society, and in 1827 emigrated to America, where he not only entered on a very successful business career, but as an eminent local preacher and generous supporter of the cause proved the instrument of most extensive and lasting good. He was one of the founders of the National Local Preachers' Association, and in 1864 its president. After the death of Mr. Love, his heir took the house at Ballycor from the Society; and the superintendent of the Sunday-school, a poor man, named Conway M'Analy, having received employment in connection with the bleach-works at Ballyclare, opened there another Sunday-school, in a private school-house in a small entry, that the Methodists were permitted to use for religious services.

The following incident presents a striking resemblance to an adventure of one of the early preachers, already narrated: One evening Mr. Waugh set out for his appointment, and the country being much disturbed, a friend asked him where he was going. He replied, "To Dunmanway." The other shrugged his

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1861, p. 178.

shoulders and said, "I would rather you should go that journey than I, this evening;" but the preacher was not the man to be easily intimidated or diverted from his purpose, and therefore proceeded. After some time he observed a set of fellows, who appeared intent on mischief; and one of them shouted, "Who are you?" "What business is that of yours?" answered Mr. Waugh, and rode on at full speed, followed by a bludgeon, which grazed the side of his head. Quickly alighting, he seized the weapon, and in a moment regained the saddle; at which a shout was raised, accompanied by a volley of stones, one of which struck him, and knocked the stick out of his hand, while a number of the ruffians, availing themselves of a turn in the road, crossed by a shorter path, and thus got in front of him. Now, thought the itinerant, they will do for me; yet putting on a bold front, and thrusting his hand into his breast, he said, "The first man of you that lifts his hand I will have his life." They then at once opened a way for him, and he dashing on, amidst yells and stones, made his escape and reached his destination in safety.*

A movement was started to erect a new chapel in Bandon. The one in North Main street had been in use for more than thirty years; and owing to the success of the Society, it was found necessary to secure a larger and more suitable building. An excellent site was obtained from the Duke of Devonshire, a subscription-list opened, and on April 12th the foundation laid in the presence of a vast concourse of people. The honour of laying the stone was conferred on Mr. Waugh; and as soon as that part of the ceremony was over, the Rev. Samuel Wood preached an eloquent and powerful sermon.†

Meanwhile another and still larger chapel was erected. This was in Abbey street, Dublin, and is said to have originated in a sermon preached by Summerfield in Whitefriar street, after which several hundred pounds were subscribed. When this building was roofed, and before the chapel itself was ready for use, services were held regularly on the upper floor. One Sunday a young man, named William Deaker, attracted by the appearance of the new building, entered, heard Mr. Mayne preach, and at the close of the service, observing several persons retire into side rooms,

* *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1883, p. 579.
† *Ibid*, 1884, p. 54.

followed some of them into one, which proved to be the place in which Arthur Williams met a class, of which William and James Carson, William and Henry Heney, and others were members. The youthful stranger was warmly welcomed, and on being addressed by the leader, gave such an account of his religious experience as deeply affected all who heard it. On that day he was received on trial, and in due time entered on the privileges and responsibilities of membership, which he retained until his peaceful death, nearly sixty years subsequently.*

On June 3rd Dr. Clarke opened this chapel, which was crowded to excess by "nobility, gentry, and others," many being unable to obtain admission. The opportunity was seized by the preacher of reading the Liturgy, and thus reintroducing into Irish Methodism the service which thirty years previously he had assisted to exclude, and rendering no longer necessary the afternoon meeting which had been adopted as a compromise. The Doctor selected for his text Deuteronomy iv. 7—9, and preached an exceedingly able and powerful sermon. The collection amounted to £140. Having made an excursion to the North, Dr. Clarke returned to Dublin in time to preach again in the new chapel, on the following Sabbath, when there was present a very great crowd, including "some of the nobles, gentry, and learned of the land."

The reports from the various mission-stations for the year now drawing to a close were most cheering. From Galway Mr. Arthur Noble writes, that although he had met with much opposition, and sometimes great danger, he had obtained such favour in the eyes of the Roman Catholics that many of them came out to hear, and were deeply affected under the word, while some joined the Society. The missionary preached regularly in the house of a Romanist, and formed in it a class of fifteen members. Mr. George Hansbrow of Tireragh says that in this new and laborious field sixty members had entered the Society. Mr. Thomas Kerr never found his Catholic fellow-countrymen so willing to hear the Gospel as they had been on the Carrick-on-Shannon mission; he had known them frequently to weep as they listened to the word preached and the praises of God sung, and at least one had come out boldly for Christ and His cause. Mr. Willian Cornwall, who had been appointed to Killaloe, states that many Romanists

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1880, p. 674.

attended his services; two who had joined the Society previously continued faithful, and a third, a schoolmaster, was a regular hearer. The latter had never read a chapter in the Bible until he heard that a missionary had brought some Irish Testaments to Mountshannon, and he was induced to take one, the perusal of which made such an impression on his mind that he walked eighty miles to obtain additional copies, which he carried home and distributed amongst his Roman Catholic neighbours.

Concerning the county of Down, Mr. James Bell reports that several new preaching-places were opened, and many persons received the Gospel, including some who had not attended a place of worship for thirty years. A society was formed at the Spa, near Ballynahinch, and several souls were won for Christ. At Dundrum the congregations were good, and a marked change for the better had taken place in the morals of the inhabitants. At Strangford one young man, a Romanist, having heard the priest warn his flock to beware of stragglers and strangers, thought that this was not the teaching of the Bible, and began at once to study the Word of God for himself. New light shone into his mind, and having received further instruction from the missionary, he continued seeking the Lord until enabled to testify to a sense of his acceptance by God through Christ Jesus. From the Ards and Comber district of the county Mr. Lanktree writes, "Increasing crowds attend the word preached; several souls have been brought to a knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins; backsliders have been restored, and believers quickened to press forward for the attainment of every promised and purchased blessing of the new covenant." *

The President, the Rev. Jabez Bunting, together with Messrs. Joseph Entwistle and Robert Newton, were appointed by the British Conference to visit Ireland, but Mr. Newton was by unavoidable circumstances prevented from coming. Mr. Entwistle, however, arrived in Dublin on Saturday, June 23rd, and on the following day preached to large congregations—at noon in Abbey Street Chapel, and in the evening in Whitefriar street. At the latter place, especially, he says there were several things that pleased him much—viz., the chapel, a square building, with gallery and roof supported by large pillars, with no pews but the

* *Report of Hibernian Methodist Missionary Society*, 1821.

stewards', and the whole kept as clean as one could conceive; the deep seriousness of the people, who, after the second hymn was sung, remained standing until the text was read, as if to hear the Lord speak, and then sat down; and the collection made at every public service, to which all contributed something. The whole presented to the eye of the stranger "a fine specimen of Primitive Methodism." On the following Tuesday Mr. Entwistle started on a tour through the provinces, visiting and preaching in Carlow, Waterford, Clonmel—where he was the guest of Mr. Joseph Higgins—Cashel, Templemore, Roscrea, and Tullamore. At Birr, on July 9th, he opened a new chapel, and says, "The congregation was large, respectable, and attentive. Most of the respectable Protestant families attended, amongst whom were the Countess of Rosse and her son, Lord Oxmantown, a lovely youth. The Earl would have been present, had he been at home. He gave the land and a subscription towards the chapel." The structure which this building replaced is still standing, but used as a slaughter-house. It is situated in an alley, off a back lane, while what was the preacher's house is in the lane itself, and thus occupies the less dishonourable position of the two. Mr. Entwistle was much impressed with the poverty and squalor of the Romish population. "No idea," he says, "can be formed of the miserable circumstances and appearance of the poor Catholics, by those who have not seen them—almost naked, living in miserable cabins, in society with their pigs, and lying upon straw. But the Protestants, who live in towns only, for they cannot live in the country, are like a different caste, in good houses, and decent in their dress, so that though our congregations are but small, compared with those in England, they look even more respectable." "The spirit of the Irish preachers," he writes, "is excellent; they appear to be men of God, but have many difficulties that we know nothing of in England," while the people seemed "much devoted to the Lord."

Meanwhile the Primitive Wesleyan Conference met on June 27th. The following young men were received on trial: George Washington, Abraham L. Dobbin, of the Charlemont circuit, George Revington of Roscrea, John Noble of Togherdoo, and Samuel Rogers of Blackslee. The reports from the circuits generally were of a cheering character, and afforded evidence of

the continued favour and goodness of the Lord. On most of them there had been blessed outpourings of the Spirit, great numbers were awakened to a sense of their sins, and many brought to a saving acquaintance with the truth, so that the increase in the number of members amounted to upwards of eight hundred. This made the total Methodist membership of the two Connexions thirty-seven thousand one hundred, being a larger number than had ever before been recognized in connection with the Societies, or was recognised again until eleven years subsequently.

In the Pastoral Address it is said, "The occurrences that take place from year to year convince us more and more of Divine superintendence over the whole of our economy, and of a blessing upon all our exertions; so that we are abundantly encouraged on every hand, and are only at a loss for expression to show the thankfulness we feel for continued proofs of bounty towards us. By the loving and effectual assistance of our representatives of circuits, our financial concerns have been so wisely managed that we are entirely free of debt, and all our wants have been completely supplied; while mutual harmony and increasing Christian love unite us all more closely to each other, and the frank and undisguised development of sentiment with which all our affairs are conducted gives security, both to preachers and people, of permanent and indissoluble concord and confidence."

At this Conference the first missions of the Society were established, it being arranged that missionaries should be appointed to stations—such as Youghal and Letterkenny—that might be judged suitable, and that a collection should be made in each of the congregations to meet the necessary expense. Mr. Dugdale was appointed the first treasurer of the Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Home Mission.

The Wesleyan Conference met on July 6th. About seventy preachers were present, with the Rev. Jabez Bunting in the chair. The Rev. Andrew Hamilton, jun., was elected a member of the Hundred, in place of the Rev. William Hamilton, superannuated, and the Rev. Thomas Ridgeway chosen by seniority, instead of the Rev. Michael Murphy. John Holmes of Clogher was received as having travelled twelve months; and three young men, including William Guard and John Feely, were admitted on trial. One death was reported—that of James Jordan, a man of much piety,

sound understanding, and keen penetration, with considerable talent as a preacher. It appeared, from the reports of the brethren, that on several circuits blessed revivals of religion had taken place, leading to considerable additions to the membership; but owing to various causes, there was a net decrease of two hundred and sixty-two.

The financial difficulties of the Connexion still continued, and pressed with increasing force. Upwards of £300 of the debt of the previous year remained, together with a deficit of about £1,700 in the current income. To meet this deficiency the preachers nobly contributed £1,260, while £550 was taken from the Book Room, and the balance remained as a debt. A circular letter was prepared and sent to the quarterly meetings, urging "the necessity and Christian obligation" of making such exertions on their respective circuits as the maintenance of the work required. Sunday-schools were warmly recommended, as a means of benefiting the rising generation. The still more important question of spiritual progress was raised; and the measures adopted at the previous Conference in Liverpool were urged on the preachers and societies, with such few exceptions as the different circumstances of the two countries required.

When the affairs of the Irish Connexion came before the British Conference, the deepest sympathy was excited on behalf of the Society on this side of the Channel. In a circular addressed to the English preachers who were not present it is said, with regard to the Irish brethren, "While we admired their unity, patience, and cheerfulness under pecuniary distress, and the extent of their voluntary sacrifices, we feel ourselves afflicted in their afflictions, and the hearts of all appeared to be in lively emotion, which expressed itself in word and deed. We felt that they were our brethren, 'flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone'—brethren in distress—that they needed our assistance, that we ought to relieve them, that we had it in our power, and that we would do it, and therefore unanimously agreed that a present of books from our stock in London should be given, and a voluntary subscription raised amongst ourselves. Most, if not every one present contributed more or less; and it was judged proper that a letter on the subject should be addressed to the preachers in the circuits, that they also might have an opportunity of manifesting their love

to the brotherhood in the same way." Upwards of five hundred pounds was contributed in response to the appeal thus made.

Not long after Conference, an opportunity was afforded the Society of expressing that loyalty to the throne for which Methodists have always been remarkable. King George IV. visited Ireland, making his public entry into Dublin on August 17th, amidst all the magnificence of a State procession, and applauded by the tens of thousands that attended his progress. Nothing could be more enthusiastic or cordial than his reception, and he remained a month dispensing and enjoying hospitality, apparently perfectly satisfying his own and his people's feelings. The opportunity was seized by the Methodists of presenting to his Majesty a loyal address, which had passed the Conference, and it was graciously received. It should also be noted that among other donations which the King directed to be paid on his behalf to various public charities in this country, was the sum of fifty pounds to the Dublin Strangers' Friend Society.

Turning our attention, however, to the evangelistic work in which the Methodists were engaged, we find tokens of continued success. In July Mrs. Whittaker, having occasion to visit Ballyshannon, found herself placed in rather novel circumstances. It was reported through the town that a lady from Sligo was there, and would preach. So a large congregation assembled, to whom she felt constrained to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation; and the Lord so graciously assisted her that she was encouraged to persevere in the work thus most unexpectedly begun.

Messrs. George Stephenson and John Holmes were appointed to the Sligo circuit, and their labours were eminently owned of God in a blessed and widespread revival. On Sunday, September 23rd, Mrs. Whittaker writes, "Being called on by Mr. Holmes to pray in the large congregation, I found such power granted from on high that it was in truth 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' I had hardly begun when a cry filled the house, some called aloud for mercy, and others wept tears of gratitude. Good was done in the name of the Holy Child Jesus." And again, on October 29th, "An amazing outpouring of the Spirit has taken place in our meeting-house, and conversions are continually experienced. The distress of some of the penitents is indescribable; sometimes they continue without food for three or four days, and will receive no

consolation until made happy by faith in the Atonement. Three in this house have been born again within this week."* Among the converts was a lad of sixteen, George Leech, who for more than sixty years subsequently proved a kind friend to the preachers and a faithful supporter of Methodism. He sustained in succession almost every office in the Society open to laymen, until at length he became a member of the Conference. Soon after he had thus attained to the highest ecclesiastical position within reach, he was called home to the Church triumphant.

Previous to the period before us, the morning service in Methodist chapels was generally held at ten o'clock, so as not to interfere with attendance at church; but now a change having taken place by preaching at noon in Abbey street, Dublin, in other places a like stand was taken. On November 23rd Mrs. Whittaker writes, "This day having heard of our people purposing to have the hour of preaching on the Sabbath changed to twelve o'clock, I was led to rejoice that God had so changed the sentiments of my heart, which were altogether opposed to such a measure, as not only to acquiesce but exceedingly rejoice in it, hoping thereby to make time for attending two classes on Sabbath mornings, and also to shake off all man-pleasing, which I saw my attending church of late savoured too much of."

A blessed religious awakening took place also at Hamilton's Bawn, a place so noted for Sabbath desecration and wickedness in general that it was called "Hamilton's Bawn, which knows no Sunday." The Rev. John Armstrong was the junior minister on the circuit, and on Christmas Day formed the first class in this village. Amongst those awakened to a sense of their need of the Saviour was Alexander Greer, Esq., a half-pay officer, who gives the following account of his religious experience: "The recollection of my past life fills me with horror, amazement, and praise—horror that for forty-one years I was the most guilty of human beings—guilty of every sin man is capable of, except murder, and even that I virtually committed, for I sometimes in my heart wished a person dead; amazement, that the Lord Almighty bore with me, and did not sweep me as a monster from the face of the earth, but, in His tender mercy, plucked me as a brand from the burning; praise that I have found a reconciled Father, and,

* Unpublished Diary of Mrs. Whittaker.

through the all-atoning blood of my Redeemer, obtained a full, free, and gracious pardon." When Mr. Greer was led to religious decision, he opened his house for the entertainment of the ministers of the Gospel, and identified himself with the Society, and thus continued his connection with Methodism until July, 1859, when he passed to the home above.

It was at this period that Thomas T. N. Hull, a lad of fifteen, became connected with Methodism. During a visit of his to some relatives in the Isle of Man, his mother became a member of the Society, and on his return home to Donaghadee, as no other member of the family accompanied her to the Methodist services, he offered to do so. There was then no Sabbath-morning meeting in the chapel, and the preachers came every second Sunday for the evening service, while a local preacher from Bangor—frequently a sergeant in regimentals—supplied the pulpit on the alternate evenings. Gradually the youth got clearer views of Divine truth, became more impressed and practically influenced by it, and was drawn by the Spirit into cordial sympathy with it, until he joined the Society, and at length was enabled to rejoice in a conscious sense of sins forgiven. He then began to work for Christ, visiting the sick, distributing tracts, and collecting for missions, and was thus led on step by step, and prepared for his subsequent protracted and useful ministerial career.

Charles Graham had been appointed to the county of Wexford mission, and on August 8th states that he had preached in the market of Gorey to a vast multitude. Fossey Tackaberry, "a most blessed young man," helped him; and they held field-meetings on three successive Sabbaths, "when crowds flocked to hear." On November 22nd the devoted missionary writes, "My strength and sight are failing, but I have cause to bless God that I have not laboured in vain and spent my strength for nought. I have been doing a little in the fairs and markets, and meet with no opposition." In Enniscorthy, on "the great market-day before Christmas," the fearless and faithful evangelist, having taken his stand in the midst of the people, was violently opposed, and whatever came to hand freely thrown to stop the service; but the Mayor came on the scene, and soon stilled the noise of the tumult. "Many then stood pale-faced and confounded," as they listened to the preaching of the word, accompanied by the power of the

Holy Ghost. In the market of Newtownbarry, when Mr. Banks saw the attention of the Romanists, he confessed that he had no hope previously of witnessing such an encouraging sight. Graham adds, "We had a great watch-night in the market-house of Gorey."

Mr. Feely was appointed to travel with Mr. Ouseley on the general mission. The veteran missionary regarded his young colleague with the greatest affection and esteem, and spoke highly of his piety, zeal, and fitness for the work. "Brother Feely," he remarks, "is quite in his element when he stands or rides in the streets to address his countrymen in their own tongue, which he speaks with great facility; and as they learn he has been of their own Church, they are the more eager to hear him." Feely also speaks with profound admiration and respect of Ouseley, more especially of his deep devotion, intense fervour, unremitting labours, and power and perseverance in prayer. He generally preached from thirteen to fifteen times each week, and even during the winter his labours were uninterrupted and his health unimpaired. In one place a schoolmaster, who had been a bigoted Romanist, became suspicious, through witnessing the violence and cruelty of his priest, obtained a copy of the Rhemish Testament, and compared it with the Authorized Version. He found that the religion he had believed differed from that taught even in the former, and, quite alarmed, called on the priest and expressed his fears. The ecclesiastic replied with a threat of the horsewhip if he should hear any more such language. "If you do, sir," said the other, "I will give you the law. I will surely indict you if you strike me." Soon afterwards he abandoned all connection with the Church of Rome, and became a member of the Methodist Society. Another schoolmaster, also in the same vicinity, read Ouseley's Old Christianity, considered it unanswerable, and declared it was calculated to convert more Roman Catholics than all the books he had ever seen. He also renounced Popery, as did one of his neighbours, to whom he stated his religious scruples.

Many other instances of good effected at this time through the writings and labours of Ouseley might be narrated. Suffice it to refer to one more. Two young men, who had received a liberal education, waited on the missionary in Queen's County, to converse with him on religious subjects. It appeared that one of them

having obtained a copy of Old Christianity, brought it to the priest, and inquired if the quotations in it were true. He was told that they were correct. "Then, sir," said the youth, "we are ruined." "Come, come," replied the priest, "we must answer it; you are a good scholar, and will do it." "Answer it!" rejoined the other, "answer truth! no, sir, never. Good-day; I must quit mass for ever." He carried out his threat, and became an assistant in a Protestant school. The other young man, who had supposed his own arguments unanswerable, after some conversation, appeared greatly astonished, and burst into tears, confessing that he had never before seen the subjects under consideration in the same light.

At this period the following interesting conversion from Popery took place: In the north riding of Tipperary there lived a farmer, named Henry Slack, who one day in 1812, being in Borrisokane, was attracted by a number of people standing in the street, and having joined them, heard the Gospel preached by Messrs. Ouseley and Reilly. The word reached his heart, and led him to invite the servants of God to his house at Derrynasling, which thenceforward became a regular preaching appointment. Mr. Slack had a labourer in his service, named Philip Rourke, a man of gigantic stature and brawny frame, who was a host in himself at faction fights, and whose shillelah made terrible havoc among his foes. He was an ignorant and bigoted Romanist, who regarded the preachers with special aversion, and resolved, if possible, to get them turned out of the house. So he went to his master and told him, on the authority of the priest, that the Methodists were dragons in sheep's clothing, and that they would do terrible mischief. Mr. Slack replied that people should not be condemned unheard, that the priest should come and hear them, and if he refused, that Philip himself should do so. The conversation having made a deep impression on the mind of the labourer, he said that though he could not go into the parlour, if the door were left open, he could hear Mr. M'Cormick, the preacher, in the kitchen. When subsequently asked how he liked what he heard, he replied, "It was very good, but some one told the preacher all about me."

Thenceforth Philip found his way regularly to the kitchen at the time of service; light penetrated the deep darkness of his mind, and he became thoughtful and troubled. In this state of

uneasy apprehension, he went to confession, stated what he felt, and admitted that he had heard the preacher. "Never mend you," said the priest. "Did I not warn you against those fellows?" Penance was laid on the awakened sinner, but without affording any relief. Heavier penances were then imposed, but still in vain. Philip became worse and worse. The priest said he thought the devil had got into him, and he would try St. Peter's belt—a strap of leather with a buckle—which was worn round the waist, and tightened as prayers were said. Rourke put on and pulled this instrument of torture, until it cut his flesh, but failed to heal his wounded spirit. The priest now gave him up to the enemy, and cautioned the people to have nothing to do with him. On the following day, in a wretched state of mind, he went to the bog to cut turf, and when his fellow-labourers went home to dinner, thought he would tell the Lord all. So kneeling down, he confessed his drunkenness, cursing, and fighting, told God how he had gone to his priest and followed his directions, but obtained no relief, and then cried earnestly, "O Lord, have mercy on me, for Christ's sake, if there is pardon for such a wretched sinner as I am." Lifting up his eyes, he thought he saw the Saviour looking compassionately at him, and felt at once his burden taken away, and his heart filled with joy. Starting up, he ran home to tell his wife what the Lord had done for him; and work was given up for the remainder of the day, which was spent in giving glory to God. On Mr. M'Cormick's next visit, Philip went into the parlour at preaching-time, and after the service concluded, gave an account of his conversion before all the people. He was now a living epistle, known and read of all men, old things having passed away, and all things become new. He also listened with great attention to the truth as proclaimed by the servants of God, mastered the art of reading, that he might study the Bible, and so faithfully witnessed and worked for Christ amongst his neighbours that he became known as Philip the Prophet. The priest once more tried his hand on this disturber of his parish. "Does your Reverence think you can make the Lord's body for me?" inquired the zealous convert. "I have that power, Philip; can you doubt it?" "Then, your Reverence, I have two little hens, but no cow. Now, if you can turn them into two milk cows, to give us milk for the children, I shall believe you

have the power you say." "Get a' gone! get a' gone!" was the reply, and so ended Philip's connection with Popery.

Rourke lived a zealous disciple, in his artless way talking and praying with the people, so that they "would rather hear him than the priest." There was a pungency and a power in his reproofs and exhortations which made them very telling. On one occasion, being in Nenagh, he went to the market-place, where were a number of people, and began to speak to them on the subject which lay nearest his heart. As the conversation went on, many drew near to listen, and his warnings became more earnest, his tones louder, and his gesticulation increasingly violent. There he stood in the midst, and could be seen from afar, head and shoulders above the crowd, urging them to give up their sins and flee from the wrath to come. A clerical magistrate, passing by, inquired what the crowd meant, and was told that Rourke the Prophet was telling the people the world would be destroyed immediately. Others said it was a madman, and he ought to be shut up; and it may be the wild action and loud voice of the speaker gave colour to this suggestion, or possibly the cleric wished to check this pestilent fellow, who belonged to the sect everywhere spoken against. Be that as it may, a committal was hastily signed, and Philip lodged in gaol, through the iron bars of which he continued to speak to the people. Next day he was liberated, and found that he had made many friends in the town.

Mr. Slack lived only a few years after this, and on his death the family sold their interest in the farm and emigrated to America. Philip was therefore obliged to remove to another part of the country. When aged and feeble, his son was most anxious to bring him back to the old Church, and tried in vain to persuade him to receive the priest. A bribe was offered if he would go once more to mass. "I'll be glad to go to *last* mass," said the old man. When Sunday came he was told it was time to go. "Where?" inquired Rourke. "To mass." "That is not the mass I promised to go to, but *last* mass, the last that shall ever be celebrated, and that will be a happy day for Ireland." As the end of life drew near, the son determined to make a final attempt to execute his purpose, and brought the priest, who on arriving said, "I am glad to hear that you are sorry for your past conduct,

and now wish to return to the true Church." The dying man fixed his eyes on the speaker, but made no reply. "Don't you know me?" asked his Reverence. "Indeed I do," said Philip. "Did you not send for me?" "No, sir." "Will you be confessed?" "I do confess to the great God," said Rourke, "that I was a very bad man; that I deserved to be turned into hell; but you know, sir, that God so loved the world that He gave His blessed Son to die for me and all mankind: I believe that blessed promise, and when He is pleased to take me out of this world it will be to be happy with Himself for ever." "Well, Rourke," answered the priest, "the confidence you have in your Saviour is the best you can have; here is a shilling, and I will give orders that no one shall be allowed to disturb you." And accordingly, before leaving, the priest said to the son that his father had made a true confession, and on no account to trouble the poor man further.*

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1873, pp. 13, 14, 27, 28

CHAPTER III.

1822.

EARLY in 1822 the Marquis of Wellesley was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and as he and those associated with him were known to be favourable to conferring political privileges on Roman Catholics, it was supposed that every ebullition of Popish turbulence would be suppressed, and a new era inaugurated, from which Ireland might date her internal union and tranquillity. But there was, as there has been ever since, in the Romish population a deep-rooted conviction that every attempt to meet their wishes was a concession to violence and disloyalty; and hence the most liberal rulers have had to contend with the greatest lawlessness. Now that a policy of conciliation was adopted, the spirit of disaffection and disagreement pervaded all ranks of society. Lord Wellesley was unable to still the strife between different factions among the upper classes, while among the lower a burning hatred to the Protestant faith and a strong repulsion to rights of property occasioned a continuance of those agrarian outrages which made the island a scene of tempestuous violence, iniquity, and disorder. The most atrocious deeds continued to be perpetrated, a system of Whiteboyism was regularly organized, and notwithstanding the unceasing vigilance of the police, people assembled in hundreds, broke into the houses of Protestants, plundered their property, and subjected them to the grossest abuse. Robbery and outrage were succeeded by famine. The potatoes, which formed the staple food in the South and West, decayed and perished in the ground, and before the end of May the whole of Munster and Connaught was in a state of starvation. The peasantry, leaving their cabins and little plots of ground, from which they had derived their scanty subsistence, crowded into the villages, seeking in vain for employment or relief from

those who were almost in as bad a position as themselves. The attention of the Government was soon directed to the destitution which prevailed, and a large sum of money allotted to the work of relief. But most of all was done by the munificent benevolence of the people of England, who, as soon as the miserable condition of the country was known, contributed upwards of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and the diligence and prudence used in the application of this fund were not inferior to the earnestness with which it had been raised.

During this season of peril and distress the Methodist preachers continued their arduous and important work, with tokens of the Divine approval and blessing. On New Year's Day Mr. Graham preached in the fair at Gorey, when he concluded; Mr. John S. Wilson continued the service, and both had a most appreciative audience. On April 20th the missionary writes, "Although the minds of the people are disaffected, and many are alarmed, yet, through all, I have an attentive hearing, and many melted into tears under the word. The work is deepening and spreading. I met thirty in class in Newtownbarry on last Sabbath morning. It was like the opening of heaven. The progress the members are making in the Divine life is astonishing." Three of these were recent converts from Romanism—one, a young man, whose father, when dying, enjoined on him to pay ten shillings quarterly, to get him out of purgatory; but his mother, who was a Protestant, left him her Bible, with a dying request to read it. He, feeling as much attached to her as to his father, brought five guineas to the priest to pray for her also; but he refused, saying, "She is hopelessly lost, as a heretic. As, however, you are so anxious, I will write to the bishop." His lordship was of the same mind; and thus the youth was thrown into utter despair. Some one then invited him to hear Mr. Graham preach, which he did, and thus was led to rejoice in God his Saviour.

On June 22nd Graham writes, "The Lord has raised up many who are now able and willing to declare the glad tidings to a perishing world. Some are leaving mass, and others are inquiring how they may make their escape. I have been lately endeavouring to open some new places, and although I have not joined them in societies, I think impressions have been made which will yield fruit. The field-meetings are much acknowledged. Heaven has

greatly blessed us with labourers in this corner of the vineyard; and many who were greatly prejudiced now see their mistake, and confess that the power of the Lord is among the Methodists. Some profess and enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification, others are pressing after it." And again, a little later, "What a mercy that our ministry is not failing, but increasing both in gifts and in grace! We have a number of most blessed young men on this mission, and a number of holy men and women who are alive to God. Their cups are full and flowing over. Among these a young man who has fled from mass is an ornament to religion, and notwithstanding the danger to which he is exposed, fears neither priests nor people. There are females also, belonging to that system, who are striving to make their escape, but are watched by their parents and friends."

On April 19th there is the following entry in the diary of James Field: "Went to Bandon, where the Lord has singularly revived His work of late. The principal instrument of this great work is Mr. William Richey, a young, plain preacher, extremely humble, pious, and laborious, who preaches a present, free, and full salvation, through the blood of Jesus." * Amongst the young men of the Society who were either converted or greatly quickened during this blessed revival were John Barry, who subsequently laboured with great success as a missionary in the West Indies; and John Nash, John Harrington, and William Starkey, who entered the itinerancy in Ireland; while the young women led to the Saviour included Rebecca Robinson, subsequently wife of the Rev. William Starkey; Annie Beamish, to whom the Rev. Matthew Lanktree, jun., was affianced, and her sister Eliza, who was married to the Rev. John Saul—a noble band of Christian sisters that would have proved a blessing to any Church. At the close of the year no less than eight hundred and ninety members were found on the circuit, the largest number ever returned from this district of country.

Owing to the disturbed state of Munster, which interfered greatly with open-air services, it was considered advisable that Messrs. Ouseley and Feely should confine their labours chiefly to Ulster and Connaught, where they had considerable success. Multitudes, including many Roman Catholics, attended their

* A Devout Soldier, p. 131.

ministry, and listened with deep attention and interest. At length Ouseley, having received a severe bruise in one of his feet, was obliged to come to Dublin for rest. Here, while unable to go out, he employed his pen in defence of Protestantism, getting through the press a statement of a young convert who had been educated for the Romish priesthood, and also replying to some pernicious works then in general circulation. While in the metropolis, he received a most interesting letter from his young friend, whose narrative he had edited, from which the following is an extract: "The Gospel seed sown by you, and nourished by our mutual friends, is producing daily an increase of peace and tranquillity of soul, hitherto unconceived by me. There is a great spirit of inquiry here. We long to see you again. Come, in short, and finish the work begun. Your last sermon in Arvagh has made a great stir. The Roman Catholics say you spoke the truth, and, in general, they tell me that they do not know the good their clergy do for them. They think purgatory a Church fiction, and are very anxious to see my objections. May the Lord continue your usefulness to the poor Irish, is the earnest prayer of your very sincere and truly affectionate child in the Lord." In another letter, alluding to his former associates, he says, "They all are forced to allow I had just reasons for separating from the Church of Rome." Mr. Ouseley mentions the case of this young convert, in hopeful terms, in a letter to Joseph Butterworth, Esq., and in connection with it expresses himself very strongly as to the policy of the Government. "I never remember," he says, "Ireland as it now is: Papists who are desolating the country, cherished; and Protestants, who should be cherished, dispirited, and their energies paralyzed. To encourage Popery is to disturb the nation; for hopes of dominancy, and priestly intrigue, will make it furious."

In June Mr. Ouseley writes that he and Mr. Feely had just returned from a tour of ten weeks through Ulster. They had preached frequently in the streets and markets, to large and deeply attentive congregations; there was not the least interruption, nor anything of an unpleasant nature; and very many Roman Catholics attended and listened with great apparent satisfaction, especially to Feely, as he told the artless story of his conversion from Popery and sin to the truth and holiness. Reference is made

to at least two intelligent and respectable Romanists, who had attended several of the public services and also waited for class-meetings. "Upon the whole," says Ouseley, "we have had an encouraging prospect in nearly every place."

During one of the missionary's visits to Sligo, as he preached to a crowd in the street, a priest named O'Connor rode up, and scattered the people with his whip. That evening, in the chapel by the river-side, Ouseley took down the names of forty persons, who joined the Society. Amongst these was William Graham Campbell, than a lad of seventeen, who some time afterwards, under the ministry of Mr. Holmes, obtained peace in believing, and then entered upon a course of evangelistic labour which was abundantly owned of God.

The pressing question of the Connexional debt appears, at this time, to have received the serious attention of several of the principal societies. Limerick took the lead, issuing a circular letter, in which prompt assistance was earnestly requested to relieve the embarrassed circumstances of the preachers. Two replies lie before us—one dated May 22nd, from the stewards of the Dublin society, addressed "to the Stewards and Leaders of the Methodist Society in Ireland." In this document are expressed regret that the plan of weekly and quarterly payments recommended by the Conference had not been as successful as could be desired, and thankfulness to the brethren in Limerick "for their worthy exertions in calling on the friends of Methodism to meet the deficiencies of the current year;" but at the same time objection is taken to the means proposed, as only sufficient to relieve the existing emergency. It is suggested that a more eligible plan, and one striking at the root of the evil, would be that a committee of finance should be appointed, consisting of representatives selected by the preachers and stewards of each district, and that all the financial concerns of the Connexion should be laid before this committee, and such measures adopted as might be deemed necessary to meet the expenditure of the year, subject, of course, to the approval of Conference.

The second reply is from the stewards on the Sligo circuit, addressed "to the Stewards and Leaders of the Methodist Societies in Ireland," and is dated June 22nd. In this letter, having expressed the warmest approbation of the Limerick circular, it is

stated that while the writers looked forward with pleasure to seeing the pressure removed from the preachers, they felt disappointed and grieved on receipt of the Dublin epistle, suggesting means to prevent anticipated difficulties, but discouraging efforts to relieve the existing distress. "We highly approve," it is said, "of such plans as shall prevent future embarrassments; but what are our preachers to do until such plans be carried into effect? Are they and their families to want bread, while they are feeding us with the Bread of Life?" And as an evidence of their practical sympathy, the Sligo friends offer a contribution of forty-three pounds.

The proposal of the Dublin stewards, however, was to a certain extent carried out. Several persons appointed by their respective district meetings, with other friends, met "to consider the plan proposed by the Dublin letter, or any other, by which the Connexion could support itself, without suffering the preachers and their families to labour under such embarrassments as they had for many years been enduring." At this meeting the following recommendations were adopted: "(1) That in every district in the kingdom a special financial meeting shall be held once a year, in the month of August, consisting of the superintendent preacher and general steward of the respective circuits in each district. Should the steward, however, of any circuit be prevented by illness or otherwise from fulfilling his appointment, it is expected that the leaders' meeting of every such circuit will appoint a person to act in his place, so that each circuit may have its representative at the special meeting. (2) That the general expenditure of the Connexion be apportioned to the different districts, according to the number of members in each, having due regard also to their comparative circumstances. A portion, however, of the Yearly Collection, which for the ensuing year may be £530, and of the profits of the Book Room, estimated at £320, will be allowed to each district, to assist in meeting the demands which may be made upon it. (3) That the number of wives and children to be provided for by each district, together with the sum that may be expected from each from the above sources, shall be published annually in the Minutes of the Conference. (4) That the proportion of expenditure that each circuit may be required to meet, as also the assistance which may be afforded by the grant to the district, from the Yearly Collection and the Book Room, shall be regulated by

the annual special district meeting. (5) That the superintendent preacher and steward of each circuit shall, as soon after the special meeting as possible, acquaint, by letter or otherwise, all the leaders of the circuit to which they may belong of the determination of such meeting. (6) That it is particularly requested of the leaders to communicate the information which they may receive, accompanied with whatever other observations they may think necessary to offer for the elucidation of the plan, to the members of their respective classes, so that every member of our Society may see the necessity for contributing as much as possible to the various collections. (7) That each circuit is to have its own Education Collection, to assist in meeting the demand for that purpose. (8) That all the collections are to be handed to the general steward of each circuit, who shall pay, by quarterly instalments, the preachers stationed on his circuit, who may be entitled to the regular allowance for wives' money, maintenance and education of children, etc." An earnest appeal was also made for subscriptions on behalf of the Connexional debt, which amounted to upwards of £8,000, and a sub-committee appointed to receive the amounts contributed. These proposals were published in a circular, signed by Messrs. William Kent and William Osborne, Dublin; John Boyd, Cootehill; Thomas Tracy, Limerick; Edward H. Bolton, Lisburn; and Thomas Shillington, Portadown, and endorsed by the President and Secretary on behalf of the Conference, which, with some slight modifications, accepted the suggestions thus made.

As the Rev. Robert Newton had been appointed by the British Conference to accompany the President to Ireland, Mr. Waugh invited him to open the new chapel in Bandon. *En route*, however, to this town he preached twice, and attended a public meeting in Cork, concerning which James Field writes, "Amazing interest has been excited. Our missionary meeting was the greatest I ever attended. £11 18*s.* was collected." The first service in the new building was held on June 23rd, at two o'clock, when the eloquent divine selected for his text Psalm xxvi. 8. He also preached in the evening, from John iii. 16. On each occasion the house was crowded. The collections amounted to nearly £96; and the recollection of the services is fresh and fragrant to the few who were present and still survive. Subscriptions were

raised to the amount of about £920. At the south side of the chapel two preachers' residences were also built, and between them an upper and a lower class-room, while underneath the preaching-house were apartments for the sexton and additional class-rooms. The whole undertaking cost about £2,160, so the trustees had to borrow £1,150, which, with a considerable amount of interest, was paid off in the course of sixteen years.

At the same time that the above scheme was carried out another great want of Methodism in this town was met, by the generosity of a gentleman who proved a warm friend of the Connexion. Mr. Henry Cornwall, being anxious to lessen the Sabbath desecration that prevailed in the neighbourhood, and considering that no means would be so likely to effect this as religious instruction, had established a Sunday-school, which was held in a cow-shed until he succeeded in erecting a suitable building. Here the work prospered beyond the highest expectations. Daily schools were then established, placed under the management of a local committee, and also proved very successful. Four hundred pounds was bequeathed by Mr. Cornwall as an endowment to assist in the support of these valuable institutions, which are maintained to the present day.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced on June 26th. There were received on trial six candidates, including Noble Wiley of the Enniskillen circuit, William Scott of Tanderagee, John Milligan of Charlemont, Daniel Macafee, and Dawson D. Heather. One death was reported, that of Joseph Armstrong, who had for thirty years laboured with great fidelity and success as a Methodist preacher; and who, as the end of life approached, was enabled to testify that his soul was full of God. There was a decrease in the number of members of six hundred and thirty-seven. Although the Society had suffered in its funds from the general depression of the times, the lay representatives generously made up the deficiencies, so as to relieve the preachers from all pecuniary encumbrances.

In order to revive the work of the Lord, it was resolved—To preach or hold prayer-meetings every morning in town and country. To pay all possible attention to the children in every accessible house, instructing them, and endeavouring to excite in them attention to spiritual things. To visit the people from

house to house, advising and praying with them. To meet the classes after preaching, when practicable, and the societies on Sabbath evenings. To preach and live the doctrine of Christian perfection. To use every possible means to promote the establishment of Sunday-schools in both towns and country places. Never to omit quarterly watch-night services and lovefeasts. And with all zeal to revive private and public bands. Missionaries also were appointed to Kerry and the west of Cork, to Youghal, and to Sligo.

The subject, however, that engaged most the attention of Conference was the publication of a magazine. The question had been discussed frequently before, but the difficulties in the way of carrying it out had appeared insurmountable. But now it was resolved that the work should be commenced early in 1823, and that the preachers and representatives be requested to use every exertion to procure subscribers. Accordingly, the first number appeared in March of the following year, and this valuable work continued to be published for fifty-six years. It was also agreed upon that a Book Room should be established, to meet the expenses of which one thousand pounds was to be raised by loan or public subscription.

The Wesleyan Conference met on July 5th, the Rev. George Marsden President, the Rev. Robert Newton Visitor, and the Rev. Andrew Hamilton, jun., Secretary. About eighty ministers were present. James Lamb, of the Wicklow circuit, and Matthew Lanktree, jun., who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months; and John Wilson, jun.,* was admitted on trial. There was one death reported, that of George Brown, who had entered the itinerancy in 1776, and was in life and death a beautiful example of perfect love and Christian simplicity. The subscriptions from the preachers towards the deficiency amounted to £547 10*s.*, while the ministers and other friends in England contributed £503 2*s.* 4*d.* The Rev. William Stewart was elected a representative to the British Conference, a position which he sustained for nineteen out of twenty-five years.

The decrease in the number of members was eight hundred

* A son of William Wilson, who entered the itinerancy in 1788, and great grandson of Philip Guier of Ballingrane.

and twenty, the causes of which, as well as other particulars in regard to the state of the kingdom, will be best seen from the following extracts from the Address to the brethren in Great Britain: "Our country, since the last sitting of the Conference, has exhibited an awful and melancholy picture of our national crimes and miseries. Outrages, robberies, burnings, and murders have encompassed us and our societies, in almost every direction, in the southern and western counties. Societies have been scattered, property destroyed, and, in some instances, our beloved brethren the preachers violently attacked on the public roads; yet, as the shepherds of the Lord's flock, no man shrank from his duty, no man neglected his circuit, and, to the praise and glory of the Great Shepherd, not a hair of our head has perished. Surely the Lord is our Keeper! In such circumstances of desolation and poverty as have succeeded the insurrectionary state of this country, when tens of thousands of the poor are begging and starving, when trade is depressed, when there is no market for agricultural produce, and when anxiety and fear have come upon the land like an armed host, it is not to be wondered at that our beloved societies should have had a large portion of the common affliction, and therefore that their numbers, and their aids towards the support of the Gospel, should have decreased. Whole families have emigrated to America, as the only place of refuge, and in consequence whole societies have been dispersed. Though our land has bled, yet God has not forgotten to be gracious to us, and in not a few instances have we seen His goodness and power manifested in the regeneration, consolation, and final triumph of precious souls." It was also some consolation that, in the midst of political disturbances, the societies continued to maintain such a reputation for loyalty that in districts where the Insurrection Act was in force the possession of a Methodist class-ticket was deemed a sufficient security for the peaceable character of the party who produced it, and answered all the purposes of a passport.*

On the morning after three preachers had been received into full connexion, the members of the Conference, deeply impressed by the hallowed influences of that service, considered the state of the work in this country, and the best means of promoting it. In

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1822, p. 585.

a general conversation, it was recommended that, as ministers, they should, with deep humility and unreserved devotion, give themselves more fully to God and His work, and that to this end they should attend more faithfully and laboriously than ever to preaching in the open air, meeting the classes, visiting from house to house, rendering the leaders' meetings more useful and spiritual, inviting strangers to attend the services of the sanctuary, distributing religious books and tracts, and also establishing schools under Methodist patronage. In order to promote Sunday-schools, it was agreed to appoint a committee, designated "The General Committee for Raising and Encouraging Wesleyan Methodist Sunday-schools in Ireland," and consisting of five members of Society in Dublin, and one from each district, with an equal number of preachers. The Conference also resolved to secure the house then in process of erection, adjoining the new chapel in Abbey street, Dublin, for a Book Room, at an annual rent of £60. These subjects were considered with such sacred feelings that it appeared to the elder brethren that at no former period in their memory had a more gracious and blessed Divine influence rested on them.

Of the public services, Fossey Tackaberry, who was present, and was placed on the list of reserve, writes, "I went to hear Mr. Newton preach; and preach he did, with a witness! He is reckoned the second greatest preacher among the Methodists; but if there be a greater, it is indeed a wonder. He spoke for an hour on Philippians iii. 8, first clause. Surely such a sermon I never heard before. The vast, crowded congregation seemed as if nailed to their seats; hardly a cough or breath was heard through the house; and not a few falling tears witnessed that the people felt as well as admired." Again, "This is observed as a day of fasting and prayer. The prayer-meeting at six this morning was well attended. The President opened it, and Messrs. Wood, Mayne, and Newton prayed. It was a time of power. It is now twelve, when the next prayer-meeting begins." The lovefeast is thus described: "No person spoke but travelling preachers. It was a time of the greatest power I ever experienced. Several present said they never felt so much of the power of God before. The Lord is evidently reviving His work in the hearts of the ministers, and it seemed that night as if He was about to revive

it through the kingdom generally. Oh, the faith that seemed to be in that meeting! Several of the preachers gave cheering accounts of revivals on their circuits. I think I shall never forget that night."

The Rev. Samuel Wood was appointed Representative to the British Conference, and, during his visit to the metropolis well-nigh sustained a serious financial loss. The entire contributions of British Methodism to Ireland, amounting to more than £600, had been entrusted to his care. This he deposited in a small hand-bag which he was wont to carry to and from Conference. One evening, on his way to his stopping-place, he hailed a passing glass coach, which he, whether from economy or modesty, discharged within easy walking distance of his lodgings. Thus the driver neither knew his starting-point nor his destination, nor did the minister know the cabman's stand or stable. When the latter had driven out of call the former was aghast to find that he had left his hand-bag, bank-notes and all, behind in the cab. Next morning he hastened to a printer's, and had placards struck off and stuck up over the city offering a handsome reward for the restoration of a valise left in a hackney-coach on the previous evening. Now Mr. Wood was, both in costume and port, so much more like Bishop Ryle's "first-class rector" than his "half-educated meeting-parson" that it was some time before it occurred to the cabman or his counsellors that the left luggage might belong to one of the Methodist preachers assembled in the city. Conference was within a few hours of its close, and still no tidings of the missing bag. Mr. Wood was almost distracted. £600 was a sum which Irish Methodism could not dispense with, of which British Methodism could not afford to produce a duplicate, and which the worthy Representative could not tell how to raise. In his distress he had stolen out of Conference into the adjoining minister's house, of which the Rev. George Morley was then the occupant. The kind-hearted brother was doing all that he could to comfort him, telling him there was no course left but to make known his trouble to the brethren, and trust their wisdom and kindness to find the best way out of it, when suddenly the despairing Representative shouted, "The valise! the valise!" and rushed hatless out into the street. Mr. Morley feared that the bewildered brother's intellect had for a time given way under

the pressure of his perplexity, till he saw him dart across the way to a man with a black bag in his hand. It had at last struck the cabman that the reverend gentleman who had left the bag behind might possibly be one of the Methodist preachers, and he was making his way to the chapel in search of its owner. The man seems not to have even speculated as to the contents of his find, and it had never crossed his mind that this could be the "valise" of the placards.*

Such was a signal instance of integrity; but not less marked was the following instance of dishonesty pardoned: There was a Romanist, named Grant, in Maryborough Gaol, under sentence of death for robbery. He had pursued a wild and daring career of vice and crime, and had even escaped the grasp of justice, but after some time was recaptured. Some members of the Society made this wretched culprit a subject of special prayer, visited him, and brought before him his awful danger, so that he was aroused to a sense of his sinfulness, freely acknowledged his guilt, and was led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross. He often said that if he had his life to live over again he would go through the kingdom warning sinners, and calling on them to turn to God; "for," said he, "they would hear me if I told them all I had gone through, and the change God wrought in my heart." And at the gallows he exhorted the assembled multitude for more than an hour, confessing his sins, and expressing his confidence that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned them.

Castlederg appears now for the first time, in the Minutes of the Conference, as the head-quarters of a mission in the county of Tyrone. Although Methodism had long existed and flourished in the surrounding country, it had no position in the town, and the spirit of the preachers was often stirred within them as they passed through it on the Sunday mornings to their appointments, and observed how the people appeared to have no regard for the law of God or the claims of religion. At length a son of Mr. James Moore, of Drumclamph, settled there, and invited the servants of Christ to his house. Soon, through the influence and example of this godly man, and the labours of the itinerants, the whole aspect of the village changed, the moral tone of the people was raised,

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1886.

and the foundation laid of a permanent and prosperous Methodist church.

Messrs. George H. Irwin, Dawson D. Heather, and John Milligan were appointed by the Primitive Conference to the Cavan circuit, which embraced a wide extent of country, affording an ample field for an earnest and zealous evangelist like young Heather. He was not satisfied with going regularly round his appointments, performing his duties and nothing more. He looked beyond the sphere of his assigned labours to regions lying in darkness and the shadow of death, and longed to hold forth in them the light of Divine truth. This led him sometimes to break through prescribed rules, and give swing for the time being to his ardent, enterprising spirit. Thus on one occasion, having heard of a district of country inhabited by a number of Protestants who were living in ignorance and sin, he said to Mr. Milligan that it was impressed on his mind that he ought to visit and preach to these people, and they arranged to go together, giving up for the time being their regular appointments. Accordingly, they set off for the place, knowing nothing of any there, only that they were lost sinners, and needed the Gospel. God had been preparing the way for His messengers, so that on arriving they found a people ready to receive the truth. A very wicked man had had an awful dream, which aroused him to great anxiety about his soul, and excited the interest of his neighbours.

The preachers went at once to see this awakened sinner, and not only spoke to him about his state and the means of deliverance, but also intimated to those who were in the house that if a place were afforded they would preach Jesus to as many as would come to hear. A house was soon obtained, the whole locality was canvassed for a congregation, and when the time of service came a dense crowd assembled. Mr. Heather preached, the power of God descended on the people, and sinners cried aloud for mercy, so that the meeting could not be closed until an early hour on the following morning. The whole population was moved as by one impulse, the congregations increased day after day, and numbers were led to the Saviour. In the meantime Mr. Irwin did not know where his young men had gone to or what had become of them. The regular places were disappointed, numerous com-

plaints were made, and the quarterly meetings approached with no one apparently to assist in conducting them. When the day of one of these services arrived Mr. Irwin was present, the people assembled, and as the meeting was about to begin a large number of people were seen approaching on the top of a distant hill. These were the young preachers, accompanied by men and women, some walking, others riding, and many driving, who had decided for God, and in the lovefeast bore grateful testimony to the grace of God. Mr. Irwin not only condoned the irregularity of his colleagues, but rejoiced in what God had done by them.

Messrs. Hazleton, Remmington, and John Armstrong were appointed to the Enniskillen and Brookeborough circuit. Mr. Armstrong refers in his unpublished diary to the kind reception he met with from Mr. Hugh Copeland;* and on the list of stopping-places are found the familiar names of Messrs. Gutheridge of Drummee; Noble Johnston, Bohevny; John Wilkin, Magherahar; John Halliday, Ballycassidy; James Johnston, Currin; John Earls, Aughaward; William Armstrong, Inishmore; Henry Copeland,* Lisbellaw; John Hunter, Ballyreagh; Adam Richey, † Carnahinny; Andrew Johnston, ‡ Starraghan; and Francis Russell, Drumbad More. Of Mrs. Russell, Mr. Armstrong writes, "She is a mother in Israel. I have hardly met her equal for good sense and sterling piety." In one house he met an old saint, who had met in class for fifty-five years, and was a spiritual child of John Smith, the Apostle of Methodism in Fermanagh. Of the circuit as a whole the young preacher says, "I find from within eight miles of Ballyshannon to Clogher about one thousand and fifty members, the lodging-houses in general respectable, and many openings, but no evenings to spare. The work of God is reviving, enlarging our classes and swelling our congregations." A widespread and blessed religious awakening did indeed take place, resulting in a large number of conversions. On September 22nd we read, "The quarterly meeting was held in Enniskillen; the chapel was so full that the people had not room to stand, and there were many outside. The Lord filled the house

* Brother of Rev. William Copeland.

† Father of the Rev. William Richey.

‡ Father of the Rev. James Johnston.

with His presence, and a few were made happy." Mr. Hazleton had preached a series of sermons on "Entire Sanctification," which proved the means of quickening the leaders to a higher spiritual life, and thus the good work commenced, and then spread far and wide. Not a few of those converted subsequently rose to positions of influence and usefulness, in which they rendered most valuable aid to the Society.

Matthew Lanktree, sen., laboured earnestly on the county of Down mission, and was cheered with tokens of spiritual prosperity. Notwithstanding much difficulty, he was enabled to continue the building of the new chapel at Comber, until December 22nd, when it was formally opened by Messrs. Charles Mayne and John F. Mathews, who preached with much pathos and power to crowded congregations.

Charles Graham was reappointed to the county of Wexford, and on August 19th writes, "I had to return from the mission very unwell, and spent eight days at home, after which I set out to meet Messrs. Ouseley and Feely in the market of Gorey. As they were late in coming, I took to the saddle and faced the crowd, and then a local preacher held forth. But before he had done, the men whom we expected came up, and then you would imagine there was scarcely a particle of antichristian superstition but was exposed and swept away for ever. The field-meetings were astonishing. The Lord is paying those two men well for their labour of love. We had a great breaking down. The places are well watered. You would wonder to see so many Protestants in a country place as we had at the field-meeting. The people are blessedly alive. Some are joining our classes, and some getting converted. Oh, what a mercy that any are making their escape from the world and the devil! 'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.'" Again, on September 19th the missionary writes, "A considerable time ago, as Mr. Mayne and I preached in the fair of Gorey, in the midst of shouting and laughter, the uproar became so great that many said they had not seen such a day since the rebellion; to some it appeared that to address such a people was all labour in vain; yet in the midst of the confusion the Lord was doing His work. A man who looked on and heard for himself was forcibly struck in observing us exposing ourselves to reproach and insult, concluded that something more than ordinary must have induced us, and the

word preached sank so deeply into his heart that a saving change took place, and he has been ever since a steady member of our Society." That young man was John Byrne. Four months later Mr. Graham says, "Although every effort is made to prevent the Catholics from hearing, yet they do hear, and I believe feel the truth which is preached. The seed may appear for some time to be under the clods, but it will spring forth and bear fruit at last. On Christmas morning a dispute arose between the priest and one of his parishioners, which led the former to attempt to strike the other, but was prevented. He then turned his vestments to curse the man, and opened a book to close it on him, when another person dashed the book out of his hand. It appeared that the man whom the priest struck kept a Bible, which was the secret of the scuffle, and his Reverence, to his great mortification, had to beg pardon for what he had done; but the other declared he would never hear him again. The Bible is opening the eyes of the people, and I am resolved they shall hear in the streets. Crowds are hearing, tears flow apace, errors are exposed, and none dare to contradict. Many say it was in the street they were convinced of their lost condition. The prospect is good, and the end will be glorious."

On December 18th Mr. Ouseley states that he was on his "sixth tour since Conference." The two first were through the counties of Wicklow, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Carlow, and closed at the end of September. During these journeys he preached in the markets, streets, and fields, from twelve to sixteen times each week, besides twice a day frequently in the chapels, and Mr. Feely did not do much less. Thus very many Romanists and others heard the Gospel for the first time, and with manifest emotion, while some were not afraid or ashamed to confess Christ. The next tour was through the county of Meath. The missionaries preached again and again, in the streets of Trim, to large numbers who were delighted to hear the Gospel in their own tongue. It appeared that the reading of the Scriptures in the jail had proved a great blessing to several of the prisoners, who, to the great alarm of the priests, abandoned the superstitions of Romanism. The fourth tour was through the counties of Westmeath and Longford. In the market of Mullingar and the street of Longford especially the audiences were large and deeply attentive, and there were several other most encouraging meetings. In the fifth tour

the servants of God parted, Mr. Feely taking the county of Louth etc., where he had good times, and Mr. Ouseley Kildare, King's and Queen's county, and Tipperary. He preached frequently, as usual, and was cheered by tokens of the Divine presence in awakening power, leading several to become members of the Society. At Nenagh, in the street on a Sabbath, there were present a vast number of people, who listened with much attention and satisfaction, and who crowded the chapel in the evening. During the sixth tour the missionaries travelled together through the counties of Meath, Cavan, Tyrone, Armagh, and Monaghan; and though at times the weather was very severe, they had large congregations and much encouragement, especially at Killashandra, Clones, Cookstown, Armagh, and Monaghan. Mr. Ouseley also refers to having received a letter from a young man, trained for the priesthood, whom he had met, and who had renounced Popery.

In a letter from Mr. Irons of the Primitive Wesleyans, Cork, dated October, he says, "I bless God His work is prospering on this and the Bandon circuits. Upwards of fifty members have been added to the Society since Conference, and some truly converted. Our last quarterly lovefeast was the best I have witnessed for a long time. We are building a neat preaching-house in Mallow, and brother Whittle one in Skibbereen."

Mr. Revington, in a letter from Bandon, written at about the same time, says, "Since Conference we have added about forty to our Society, and our congregations have greatly increased. The religious feeling which prevails at our meetings encourages me to hope that much good will result. There is a visiting committee, consisting of some of the most pious and respectable members of our Society, who distribute tracts and copies of Wesley's sermons, amongst the Protestant inhabitants of the town, give religious advice, and invite the people to the means of grace. The members of Society also devote a few minutes each day to prayer that God may revive His work. To these means, together with prayer-meetings, which have been established in different parts of the town, we attribute, under God, our prosperity."

Through the ministry of Mr. Revington, there was converted a young man, named George Thomas, then seventeen years of age. Consecrating himself fully to the service of God, he became a very useful member and office-bearer of the Society. Though of

retiring habits, he threw himself with all his energies into the work, and the Lord greatly blessed his efforts. His simplicity of character was marked, and the influence he wielded, though great, apparently unconscious. His devotional spirit and uninterrupted union with Christ led to a tranquillity of soul and self-control, which continued unmoved by severe and even sudden provocations. He was a generous contributor to the cause of God, and as life approached a close manifested a growing meetness for "the inheritance of the saints in light," his last words being, "Perfect peace—perfect peace." For twenty years he had been steward to the Earl of Bandon, who, with a number of the tenants on the estate, erected an expensive and beautiful tablet to his memory in Ballymodan church.

The Rev. Samuel Kyle having been incapacitated for work on the Skibbereen circuit by an accident, which well-nigh cost him his life, Fossey Tackaberry was sent to his assistance. A journey of one hundred and seventy-four miles on horseback, and made in safety, through strange and disturbed parts of the country, naturally excited in the youthful preacher emotions of the liveliest gratitude. "At Fermoy," where a chapel was erected this year, he says, "I met with a prodigy indeed, the head surgeon of the twenty-sixth regiment of foot rightly converted. A simpler, plainer, sweeter man I have not seen since I left home than Dr. Coldstream. He told me all about his conversion, which took place at Gibraltar." It was market-day when Mr. Tackaberry arrived at Skibbereen; and Irish being rarely spoken in his native place, it was passing strange to him not to hear a word of English during his progress through the crowded streets. The first day he laboured in the town afforded ground for hopeful anticipations. "I have now spent a Sabbath among this people," he says. "There are some precious souls here, and I had much freedom in speaking to them." On this circuit he had to ride every fortnight, from sixty to eighty miles on very bad roads, to preach twenty-two sermons, and to meet fourteen or sixteen classes. The wild and bleak scenery did not impress him favourably; but among the people he felt at home and happy, having "uncommon liberty" in preaching almost in every place, and his whole soul was drawn out in earnest prayer that the Lord would revive His work. He was therefore soon cheered with tokens of prosperity—some were led to decide for God, several added to the Society, and the members in general much quickened.

CHAPTER IV.

1823.

One of the truest friends of Irish Methodism was Dr. Adam Clarke, who never forgot his obligations to the Society, as opportunity presented did his best to promote its welfare, and in times of gloom and darkness encouraged it to look forward to brighter days. On January 29th, 1823, he writes, "I thank God I have lived to some purpose in the Methodist Connexion. I have been the means of inducing the preachers in general to cultivate their minds, and to acquire a knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, so that we are likely soon to have not only a pious, but also a learned and efficient ministry. My letter on behalf of the Irish preachers is, I believe, well received, and I hope will be very productive. Mr. Bunting writes to me that he thinks it will get £1,000, and if so I shall thank God I ever wrote it. In my own hands it has produced not merely one pound, but forty times that sum. I took care to send it where I had reason to believe it would succeed. Irish Methodism will rise. Thank God, it is redeemed from its trammels. May it stand in the liberty wherewith Christ has made it free, and in the old yoke of bondage may it never again be entangled!" *

Cheering reports appear as to the state of the work in various parts of the country. On January 18th Charles Graham says, "I would recommend all who can preach, more and more to preach out of doors. It is true the devil does not like it, nor does any man who confers with flesh and blood; it is also true an uproar may betimes attend it, such I had in the street of Enniscorthy, on New Year's day. However, after the storm there succeeded a calm, the power of the Lord came down, and many were melted into tears. So it was in Gorey market last Saturday;

* Unpublished letter to the Rev. A. Mackey.

some said they were never happier, and poor sinners were weeping on every hand." *

On February 7th James Field writes from Cork, "The Lord greatly blesses the labours of Mr. Tobias; the word comes with power. Several obtain pardon, some purity. I have gained forty members during last year. The Tuesday class papers are full—not room for one more name. I am happy; never more heartily engaged in my Lord's work." † Amongst those converted was Miss Harriet Moran, subsequently Mrs. James Hughes, who on the day following her decision for God sought the minister, and said she had come like the restored leper, who gave glory to God, that she might thankfully acknowledge the grace she had received. Mr. Tobias at once placed her in a suitable class. She also became a member of the bands, and in these fruitful means enjoyed hallowed fellowship with kindred spirits, grew up in the life of faith and love, "as willows by the water-courses," so that her sanctity, prayerfulness, and zeal, accompanied by all the charms of mental culture and winning grace, made an impression still fresh and fragrant.‡

On February 17th the Rev. George Hansbrow writes, from Killaloe, "I am surrounded, almost daily, with 'beasts of murderous prey;' every feeling is often harrowed with reports and realities of desperate scenes of woe, sufficient to make the Stoic feel, the patriot blush, and the Christian weep. If tears of blood could stop these appalling scenes it would be well indeed. Notwithstanding these things, and the commercial and agricultural distress of this country, there are not a few who find that Christ is precious, and many more are striving to give their hearts to Him. Those who attend the services appear to have a growing desire to hear, and evince a willingness to be reproved for their sin. Could I find proper leaders, much more good would be done." §

John Feely, who was appointed to assist Gideon Ouseley on the general mission, states that in a tour from Aughnacloy to Tullamore, commenced on December 23rd, during which they visited

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* *Report of Hibernian Missionary Society*, 1823, p. 35.
† Memoirs of James Field, p. 76.
‡ *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, p. 958.
§ *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1823, p. 486.

Augher, Carnahinny, Brookeborough, Enniskillen, Swanlinbar, Drumshambo, Carrick-on-Shannon, Elphin, Roscommon, Ballymurray, Athlone, Moate, Kilbeggan, and Tyrrellspass, he was greatly encouraged to persevere in his arduous work as an Irish missionary; for many Romanists heard the truth in these places with profit. One man said, "I will in future hear the Gospel from you, though I know I shall be dreadfully persecuted. Oh, do, sir, give me more advice how to obtain the salvation of my soul!" Another said, "I have no much English at all, but you speak Irish, and I want to break my mind to you. I live here above, with one of the most civil men in Ireland, and the priest tells me he is a devil, and that I am a real devil because I hear him read the Scriptures. I bid him come and speak to him, if it was the devil, but he won't do that, but he will rail at me. God Almighty pity us, that we are under the paws of the priests. If a poor person die, they will leave his soul there in purgatory for ever and ever, unless they get the money some way or other. But if he be rich, and the money paid down, then they will say masses enough to get him out. They call me preacher, since I heard you last week; but I don't care. What you said would put more of God's fear into a person's heart, and make him think more about his soul, than ever so many masses and things." * Such were some of the shrewd remarks of one of many just emerging out of the darkness and superstition of Popery.

The Rev. Robert Bailey, who had been appointed to the Rathmullan mission, having been laid aside, John Feely was sent to take his place, and in giving an account of his work here he says he preached at Court to an affectionate people, who heard the word with joy and gratitude. At Rathmullan many attended, and listened with great attention, and the Society consisted of lively, serious Christians. At Glenleary he preached chiefly in Irish, as Roman Catholics were present. At Rawros, a hamlet in the mountains, into which the Gospel had been introduced a few years previously by the Methodist missionaries, a large number were present, who listened attentively. On the following morning, after having swum his horse across a river about half a mile broad, he discoursed in Glinsk, another village into which the Gospel had been introduced a few years previously, by the missionaries,

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1823, p. 34.

and where there was a small Society and a pretty large congregation. He also preached at the back of Muckish, "to a decent people," many of whom could not speak English, and who heard the word with attention.*

At Annadale, where the cause had declined until it ceased to exist, a society was again formed by the Rev. William Foote, and its first members were Mr. and Mrs. James W. Slacke, the son and daughter-in-law of the sainted Mrs. Angel Anna Slacke, and their daughter, who each determined to give up the world and its vanities, and "to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified," and thus their abode became once more a house of prayer.†

The Rev. Charles Graham thus describes the results of his five years' labours in the county of Wexford: "There are now eighty members on this mission—some convinced of sin, some converted, and a few who profess to having received sanctifying grace. In some places we have no class-meeting, for want of leaders or praying members; but there is every prospect that the Lord will raise up those who will assist in this way. There are three local preachers, zealous and useful, and three who can exhort, pray, and hold meetings. One of the local preachers was a Roman Catholic." ‡

Similar reports of success are also given in connection with the labours of the Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Society. On the Maguiresbridge circuit there appears to have been an extensive and gracious awakening, which commenced at Ballyreagh, on the evening of January 6th, when nine persons professed to have experienced "the peace which passeth all understanding;" and the revival continued to spread far and wide. "I think," says Mrs. Herbert, "I never saw before a more general work of God. Our last quarterly meeting was one of the best I have ever been at. Many cried aloud for mercy, and numbers were filled with heavenly consolation." From Downpatrick Mr. Macafee writes, "Our congregations are greatly increased, new places have been opened, sinners convinced and converted, backsliders reclaimed, and many of the classes augmented in their membership.

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* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1823, pp. 486-87.
† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1830, p. 731.
‡ The Apostle of Kerry, p. 231.

Not a jarring string is heard, and our lovefeasts are extremely profitable;" while in a letter from Tullamore, dated February 11th, Mr. Wiley states that the societies on his circuit were generally increasing both in numbers and in piety. At Edenderry the place of meeting was too small to contain the congregations; but a new chapel was nearly completed, and a society of sixteen members had been formed, within a mile of the town.*

It should perhaps be noted here that the chapel in Cookstown, which had been for nearly seven years in the hands of the Primitive Society, was regained by the Wesleyans. The lord of the soil, Colonel Stewart, M.P., having referred the case to Thomas Staples, Esq., K.C., for settlement, he decided that the landlord was bound "to grant a lease to those persons who represented the Conference, and as such were the genuine followers of Wesleyan Methodism." Accordingly, Mr. George Burrows had the gratification of conducting the re-opening service, when he preached from 1 Samuel xii. 24, to a large and attentive congregation.

On Sunday morning, June 8th, after a stormy passage of twenty-three hours, Dr. Clarke arrived at Belfast, and preached twice that day in Donegal square chapel, to crowded audiences, including some of the leading clergy and gentry of the town. On the following day, at a social gathering, he met the preachers, stewards, leaders, and principal friends of the Society, and endeavoured to set them right on many matters, on which they had got very uneasy. "It was," he says, "a very solemn and affecting time, and all appeared determined to leave minor matters and considerations, and strive together for the hope of the Gospel, laying themselves out to be more useful to society at large, and to labour more abundantly to bring sinners to God." On some one proposing the question, "Is Methodism now what it was?" Dr. Clarke answered in a way very different from what had been expected. "No," he said; "it is more rational, more stable, more consistent, more holy, more useful to the community, and a greater blessing to the world at large;" and this he found no difficulty in proving.

From Belfast the doctor proceeded to Magherafelt, and thence

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1823, p. 179.

to Maghera, where he was earnestly requested to remain for the day and night. Having visited Coleraine, Antrim, and other provincial towns, he reached Dublin, and on the following Sabbath preached from 1st Timothy ii. 8, in Abbey street chapel, "to a noble congregation, solemnly attentive to every word." Owing to the disturbed state of the country, many of the friends thought it would not be safe for him to make his proposed journey in the South, so the preachers met to consult on the question, and make it a subject of prayer. All, except one, thought it not prudent for him to go; but as Dr. Clarke also did not go with the majority, he started off, and on the 18th arrived at Cork in safety. On the following evening he attended the public anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The chapel was very full, the audience most attentive, and a good influence appeared to rest on all present. Of Cork he says, "I find many deeply pious as well as sensible people in this place; they enter into the spirit of the Gospel, and desire to receive its fulness." On Sunday, 22nd, he preached to very large congregations, from Colossians i. 27, 28, and Romans i. 16. Next day he went to Bandon, to preach the anniversary sermons of the opening of the new chapel, and says he had one of the loveliest congregations he had seen in Ireland, and had much freedom and power in urging the exhortation in Jude 20 and 21. The time was solemn, the congregation deeply attentive, and God bore testimony to His own truth. Dr. Clarke then returned to Dublin, and records the following reflections, as the result of his observations: "The Roman Catholic population of Ireland is in general in very great misery, and this is chiefly occasioned, not by any political incapacities under which they labour, but through a bad creed, which prevents the cultivation of their minds; for among the Roman Catholics education is greatly proscribed, and therefore they know nothing of the management of their own minds, and become the tools of the priests. Thus through want of knowledge the people are easily misled, and through the strength of their passions they are readily employed in acts the most desperate, and schemes the most preposterous." *

The Wesleyan Conference commenced on Friday, June 27th. Dr. Clarke presided, and was assisted by the Rev. John Stamp,

* Life of Adam Clarke, iii., pp. 49—65.

whom the British Conference had appointed to accompany him for that purpose. The Rev. Samuel Wood was elected secretary. The usual business was transacted with the utmost harmony and affection, and the gracious presence of God was largely experienced. Nathaniel Hobart of the Dunmore mission, who had been called out during the year as a supply on the Dungannon circuit, was admitted as having travelled twelve months; and John S. Wilson of Hacketstown, John Haire of Sligo, Henry Price, James B. Gillman, and Fossey Tackaberry were received on trial. One death was reported, that of William Copeland, who, after much suffering, endured with great patience, had quietly fallen asleep in Jesus on Sunday, September 22nd, 1822, aged forty years.

There was a decrease in the membership of six hundred and seventy-nine, which, together with the state of the country, is thus referred to in the Address to the British Conference: "We cannot but feel pained that, after the lapse of another year, the spirit of insurrectionary faction has not subsided in our country. In some districts outrages very disgraceful to our national character, have prevailed to an alarming extent. It was hoped that a lenient administration of our salutary laws, together with the prompt benevolence of Great Britain in the day of adversity and famine, would have checked the progress of crime, and have allayed those prejudices which have been kept alive by designing men; but we regret that in the attainment of this desirable object we have been disappointed. Many of our beloved brethren, in the disturbed parts, have been exposed to imminent danger. They have not, however, in any instance declined from their regular course, nor shrunk from the call of their ministerial duty. And though 'in journeyings often, in perils by our own countrymen, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often,' yet God hath made a way for our escape, comforted us in our tribulations, and preserved us to the praise of His glory. Notwithstanding that undeniable facts afford a gloomy representation of the state of our beloved country, we are not in despair, but indulge the encouraging anticipation of beholding a brighter scene, when we shall be made 'glad according to the days wherein we have been afflicted and the years wherein we have seen evil,' and when, after having 'sown in

tears,' we shall 'reap in joy.' This expectation is considerably strengthened by many gracious visitations vouchsafed to our congregations during the past year, and by a deepening of the work in many of our Societies. Our decrease in numbers must be attributed, not to a decline of the work of God, but to a variety of local circumstances, which have unsettled many families, and to emigration, by which alone we have been deprived of nearly five hundred of our dear people. The report of our Irish mission has this year afforded increasing satisfaction. God has blessed the labours of our missionaries, and new and promising openings present themselves. We have made considerable improvement on the stations, by increasing the number of our preachers, and confining and concentrating their labours." *

Two new committees of ministers and laymen were appointed at this Conference—one to carry into more effectual operation the resolutions of the preceding Conference for promoting Sunday-schools, and the other for "selecting and providing tracts" for distribution throughout the country.†

As to public services, we observe that on Sunday, June 29th, Dr. Clarke preached from John iv. 24, in Abbey street chapel, to an exceedingly large congregation. He says he had reason to believe that not a few of his deeply attentive hearers, during the discourse, "came even unto His seat, and received both light and knowledge." On the following Sabbath the learned doctor occupied the pulpit of Whitefriar street chapel, and selected for his text Philippians i. 9—11. "A vast crowd of people of all distinctions—clergy, ministers, and some functionaries of state"—were present. At the ordination service "the congregation was large and earnestly attentive," each candidate, with the utmost simplicity of spirit, narrated his religious experience, and the President used the form of the Church in ordaining priests. The hearers were all much affected and edified, and the preachers found it to be a time of fresh anointing from God. The annual public meeting of the Missionary Society proved an occasion of much interest and profit. And when the business of the Conference ended the members partook of the Lord's Supper together, and it was also a time of great refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

The members of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference, number-

* Minutes of the Irish Conference, ii., pp. 140-43. † *Ibid*, p. 107.

ing nearly sixty, assembled on June 25th, with the Rev. Adam Averell in the chair, and Mr. Robert Smith secretary. There had been one death in the ranks of the itinerants—that of William Little, a man of zeal and integrity, who after a painful and protracted affliction, borne with Christian fortitude, died in peace. A decrease of three hundred and ten was reported in the membership, which was attributed solely to the distresses and distractions of the country, which had compelled hundreds of the members to seek a more peaceful asylum in a distant land. During the year many new channels had been opened for conveying the stream of Gospel truth, and several new Societies had been formed. In considering the general state of the cause, the Conference found occasion of thankfulness in the degree of stability with which the great Head of the Church had so blessed them. Through the zealous exertions of the stewards and representatives, the Connexion was kept free from debt, except for the erection of new buildings. During the year preaching-houses had been opened at Waterford, Mountrath, Ballyshannon, Strangford, and Moate. Numerous and attentive auditories were present at the various public services, and the presence of the Lord was specially manifested at the meeting for receiving the preachers who had passed the usual term of probation. At the Conference lovefeast cheering information was given of the progress of the work on several circuits, and of some blessed revivals in which many had been converted to God. During the sessions of the Conference the attention of the preachers and representatives was particularly directed to the necessity of encouraging, by every means in their power, the study of the Holy Scriptures, and also the promotion of Sunday-schools, in order to which special public meetings were held.

The state of Ireland evidently occupied the serious attention of the British Conference, and led to the employment of additional preachers. Hence we find the following passage in the Answer to the Address of the Irish Conference: "Convinced as we are of the inadequacy of the present means to the mental and moral wants of a vast portion of the population of Ireland, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, we have agreed to increase the number of Irish missionaries from eleven to twenty-one, who are to preach (as much as possible in the Irish language) to those of your

countrymen who could not otherwise enjoy a regular ministry of the word, and to establish day-schools, in addition to those already under your care, for the instruction of children in the principles of our holy religion." The Rev. Valentine Ward was appointed to visit the mission-stations for the purpose of encouraging the opening of these schools, and inspecting those previously established. The special object of these humble institutions was to combine religious with secular instruction in remote and sparsely populated regions. The teachers were nearly all local preachers, and proved in many instances eminently useful.

Fossey Tackaberry was appointed to Queen's county, and his very "entrance in" was not "in vain." Early in August he writes that he had already witnessed three conversions. Soon afterwards, at Mountrath, having preached three times to large congregations, one Sabbath, and met two classes, he announced a prayer-meeting, inviting the penitents to come to it on the following morning. The power of the Lord was present to heal—four persons obtained pardoning mercy, and several followed the young preacher to a place within two miles of the town, where, at class-meeting, after the public service, a young man professed to have received the evidence of his acceptance with God. A little later Mr. Tackaberry writes, "Our circuit is certainly looking up. One Sabbath evening I preached in Abbeyleix, on Revelation vi. 17. Two young men were awakened under that sermon, one of whom found peace two weeks subsequently, the other is still seeking. They are both the sons of leaders, and both began at once to meet in class." On Christmas day the congregations in Mountrath were unusually large, and the indications hopeful. At the lovefeast on the following day Mr. Downing preached, Mr. Tackaberry says, one of the best sermons he ever heard; and such an overwhelming sense of the Divine presence was felt in the after-meeting as he had not witnessed before in this district of country. Nearly all present declared they never were so happy previously, and many in the classes began to speak of entire sanctification. One of those converted at Abbeyleix was Robert Dobbs, who twelve years subsequently was appointed a leader, and for thirty-five years—until the Lord called him hence—discharged the duties of his office with marked fidelity and acceptance.*

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1871, p. 72.

On October 30th Charles Graham writes, from Athlone, "Mr. Banks has been very ill, and I hear Mr. Steele is not well. We had the Rev. Valentine Ward here, and he gave great satisfaction to all who heard him. I have been preaching a good deal in Irish at some of my places. There is a Roman Catholic young man who hears me; he has bought a Bible, and now doubts the Romish doctrines. The army seems much on the alert."

The Rev. William Reilly, who was stationed on the Galway and Roscommon mission, visited Sligo, where he not only preached, but also spoke with great effect at a meeting of the Bible Society, presided over by Lord Roden, and also addressed by the Rev. William Urwick. As Mr. Reilly returned home, when near Boyle, a shot was fired at either him or his horse, but providentially neither was injured.* "The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

Messrs. George Burrows and John Armstrong were appointed to the Monaghan and Aughnacloy circuit. The former says, "The Lord granted us peace and some degree of prosperity, although throughout this country the spirit of division had spread its influence, and its wounds rankled." Mr. Armstrong, however, gives fuller details. Of Aughnacloy he observes, "Never was I better pleased with any Society than this. Here we have sincerity, simplicity, respectability, and genuine piety. There is a large congregation, about fifty in Society, besides a class of twenty children, and six houses to lodge the preachers. We have also nearly one hundred subscribers of one penny each weekly to the missions; and this work is managed by a committee of ladies, Mrs. Captain Moore being president, Mrs. M'Adam treasurer, and Miss M'Kay secretary." At Rockcorry he states, "We have a few steady friends, a good congregation, and an excellent house of worship." Concerning Kilmore he writes, "It is a long time since the Gospel was first preached in this village, and though Methodism has not made the progress it might have done, yet many have gone from this village to their reward through the labours of the Society." In Lisnawery and Hamilton's Bawn, he says, "there are large congregations of attentive hearers," while of the Society he had formed at the latter, three years previously, the majority stood firm, and now consisted of two classes, with forty

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1868, p. 140.

members. He seldom had been in a town so free from prejudice as Augher, so that in visiting from house to house he was kindly received by every one except one young man, who when invited to the service, said, "Bad as I am, I am not that bad yet." At Derryroosk a new class of fourteen members was started, and at Aghnamullen an old one that had been reduced to one, Hugh Wilson, was increased to twenty-five or thirty. One of these, brought into connection with Methodism and converted, was a young man named James Hughes, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, and rendered long and valuable service to the cause.

There was a blessed revival of religion in the district of country about Ballynacoy, and many became anxious about salvation, and united themselves to the people of God. The holy fire spread from place to place, until large numbers were turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." This gracious movement resulted to a great degree from the Divine blessing on the Sunday-school, where it appears to have originated, and by means of which the people were prepared for it.*

The reports from various circuits of the Primitive Wesleyan Society, during the second six months of this year, were of a most cheering character. From Enniskillen Mr. Buttle writes that at the September quarterly meetings the Holy Spirit was present, both to wound and to heal. Thus a gracious religious awakening commenced, during which many were turned to the Lord. These included some of the most abandoned sinners. One old gentleman, in particular, who had been a cock-fighter and most ungodly, was made the subject of Divine grace, and became as remarkable for devotedness to God as he had been for recklessness and sin. Concerning Maguiresbridge Mr. William Browne reports that the greater part of the circuit was prospering, and that many souls had been brought to a saving knowledge of God. Mr. Pattyson, who was appointed to Newtownstewart, states that his circuit was flourishing; they had formed four or five new classes; the congregations in Strabane, Fintona, and Newtownstewart were considerably increased, and the word preached did not fall to the ground. Mr. Richard Robinson of Belfast says, "We have an increase of thirty members since Conference. This, with the

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1853, pp. 515-16.

opening of our new chapel in Antrim, where the prospect is delightful, and the putting up of a gallery in our house in Belfast has given additional extension and permanence to our cause in these parts."

From the south and west the intelligence was equally encouraging. In Waterford Mr. Revington found the congregations and the Sunday-school, established by Mr. West, increasing, and many members added to the Society. At Bandon it appeared that the good work deepened and spread. There was scarcely a class which had not some additional members, and some new preaching-places were opened in the adjoining country. Similar reports were also sent from Longford, Clonmel, Cloughjordan, and Roscrea, while in Dublin "crowded and serious auditories attended the ministry of the word." *

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1823, pp. 357-59.

CHAPTER V.

1824.

EARLY in the year 1824 death made sad havoc in the ranks of the Wesleyan preachers, no less than three being called hence within about as many months. The first of these was the fearless and faithful Samuel Steele, who in Dublin, on January 10th, in the meridian of his strength and influence, died in the full triumph of faith. His remains were interred, amid the tears and lamentations of thousands, in the Cabbage Garden; and a funeral sermon was preached for him, by the Rev. Samuel Wood, in Whitefriar street chapel, to a vast congregation, including ministers, stewards, leaders, members of the Strangers' Friend Society, and children of the Orphan School. The second death was that of a humble and devoted man, William Gilcriest, who, owing to serious illness, had been obliged to retire from the active work two years previously, but having somewhat recovered, went to fill a vacancy on the Manorhamilton circuit, where he got cold from hardship, and on February 25th, at Swanlinbar, died in peace. The third of those removed to their eternal reward was Charles Graham, an aged veteran, who having travelled as a missionary for nearly thirty-four years, died at Athlone on April 23rd, in holy triumph. "His powerful appeals to street congregations were pathetic, and sometimes overwhelming; the multitudes heard, trembled, and fell before him."

Some cheering glimpses are given of the labours and successes of those engaged in the work of the itinerancy. The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry writes, "Although I cannot say with Bramwell, 'I see some saved every night,' thank God, I can say I see some saved every round." Again, "The Mountrath meeting was a blessed one indeed. Many declared that they never had seen such a meeting previously. Our house, ground floor and gallery,

was very full during the lovefeast, and all felt that God was there. We had a few testimonies to entire sanctification, and several hungering after it; and we had a cloud of witnesses clearly testifying that Christ hath power on earth to forgive sins. Two received a conscious pardon during the meeting. Mr. Downing says he saw nothing like it since he came, nor does he think the circuit was in so good a state these ten years." While at Abbeyleix, such was the prosperity of the cause that the erection of a new chapel was rendered necessary, for which a suitable site, on easy terms, was obtained from Lord De Vesci, and the project carried out.*

The Rev. John Armstrong writes, "February 8th. This day we had the Sacrament in Monaghan for the first time. At preaching the house was filled, and between forty and fifty came forward to the Lord's table. It was a time of refreshing." And again, "In Monaghan we are rising in every sense. We have got a tract society formed, with Samuel Richardson as president, and Thomas Hetherington, who has lately joined us, as secretary." While at Castleblayney, in the neat chapel recently erected, there was a large congregation.†

Even at this early period an earnest effort was made to arrest the progress of intemperance, profanity, and Sabbath desecration. At Bandon a number of leading Methodists, including John Wheeler Sullivan and George Harris, consented to act as overseers, and see that the laws with regard to profane swearing, the observance of the Lord's day, and the hours for the sale of intoxicating drinks were enforced. Many delinquents were summoned before the magistrates and fined, which resulted in a considerable and marked improvement in the morality of the town. These faithful maintainers of law and order continued their labours until they were rendered unnecessary by the appointment of paid police. Meanwhile, however, a considerable sum of money was obtained from fines, and this was applied to the establishment of a loan fund, which has proved a means of still further benefit.

The Committee appointed in 1822 for the liquidation of the debt of the Wesleyan Connexion issued its report this spring,

* Life and Labours of Rev. F. Tackaberry, pp. 82-5.

† Unpublished Diary of Rev. J. Armstrong.

signed by Henry Heney, secretary. From this document it appears that it had been hoped that a sum of £1,000 would have been raised annually by special subscriptions, which in eight years would have relieved the Society of its liabilities; but this expectation was not realized. However, during the year 1822-23 nearly five hundred pounds was collected, and applied to the object contemplated. It was then proposed to borrow money from such friends as might be disposed to lend, free of interest, to invest it, and repay it at the end of ten years; but this expedient failed. The first plan was therefore again adopted, and an earnest appeal made for practical assistance. The Committee had also entered into a correspondence with the creditors, in order, if possible, to reduce the rate of interest from six to five per cent., and met with an encouraging reception.

The Wesleyan Conference met on June 25th. The Rev. Henry Moore presided, and was accompanied by the Revs. Robert Newton, Valentine Ward, and Joseph Taylor. The Rev. Andrew Hamilton, jun., was elected secretary. Of fifteen candidates proposed for the ministry, six received appointments. These were Claudius Byrne, James Patterson, James Sullivan and Joseph Crofts of the Newtownbarry circuit, Robert Beauchamp of Limerick, and John Nash. The health of Crofts gave way during the year, so that he was obliged at length to retire from the work, and a few years later he died happy in God. After filling up the vacancies occasioned in the membership by deaths, emigrations, which had largely prevailed, and other causes, there was a small increase; while it was found that an increasing spirit of unity prevailed in the societies, pecuniary embarrassments were considerably lessened, and the Head of the Church smiled on the labours of His servants. The pain and depression of the long-continued agitation appeared to have passed away, and a cheerful tone was observable everywhere.

At the previous Conference a Sunday-school Committee had been appointed, and this year appear in the Minutes, doubtless as the result of its work, the first authoritative statistics of the number of Methodist Sunday-schools and scholars, being one hundred and thirty-eight schools, and nine thousand one hundred and ninety-one scholars; but the Committee was not reappointed. It was arranged that the Conferences should thenceforward meet

in Cork and Belfast as well as in Dublin. The annual missionary meeting, held in Abbey Street Chapel, proved a service of unusual interest. The President of the Conference occupied the chair, and addresses were delivered to a large audience by the Revs. Robert Newton, B. W. Mathias, and Valentine Ward, together with James Heald, Esq.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference met on June 30th, and nearly sixty preachers and lay representatives were present. George Emerson of Bandon, James Morrow of Ballyjamesduff, Robert Kane of Clones, Daniel Henderson of Ballyconnell, Edward Sullivan of Ballyshannon, and James Craig of Charlemont were received on trial. There was a decrease of six hundred and ninety-three in the total number of members. "The reports of the missionaries respecting the progress of religion, on their different stations, however, were of the most cheering nature." Two large public meetings were held, at which important speeches were delivered on the subject of education, and from which good results were anticipated. Although no death had taken place during the year in the ranks of the itinerants, the Conference had not long concluded its sittings when one of the members, Alexander Anderson, was suddenly called hence. He was on his way to his new circuit, and having travelled safely as far as Downpatrick, his horse took fright, and he was so injured that he survived only an hour. His last words were, "Blessed be God, I have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ."

For some years prior to this period the Methodist New Connexion had a few congregations in Ulster, the people being assisted in the maintenance of their preachers by their friends in England. But this year the Conference selected this country as a field of missionary enterprise. The following resolution, which was adopted, indicates the new arrangement: "The Conference, sincerely deploring the ignorance, superstition, and misery prevalent in Ireland, and believing that a field there presents itself in which the Methodists of the New Connexion, as well as Christians of other denominations, may exert themselves to advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom and promote the salvation of immortal souls, resolves, That the institution denominated the 'Home Missionary Society' be henceforth exclusively devoted to the support of missionary labours in Ireland." The Conference

of the following year developed the plan in its details, appointed a committee to conduct the business of the mission, and resolved on sending an English preacher to superintend the labours of the missionaries.

The first recorded public missionary meeting in Bandon was held on August 26th, when it was reported that £78 had been raised on the circuit, during the previous year, for the funds of the Society. The Rev. Henry Deery presided, and addresses were delivered by the Revs. Matthew Tobias, Thomas Lougheed, John Wilson, jun., and Matthew Lanktree, jun., together with Messrs. Thomas Bennett, William Barry, and Thomas Beamish.†

On the illness and death of Mrs. William Barry, in this town, her class was placed under the care of Miss Eliza Allworth, a most devoted and exemplary member of the Society. She sustained with zeal and efficiency the office to which she was thus called for nearly forty-three years, when she was taken to the Church above. Her father had been a very wicked man, but, in infinite mercy, was at length converted, so that his excellent wife could joyfully and gratefully say, "The lion has become a lamb.' Miss Jane Allworth was also deeply pious, and a very beautiful singer. With such sweetness, pathos, and power was she wont to sing for Jesus that the memory of anthems and other sacred songs, sung by her, is still fresh and fragrant in the town. Her career, however, was much shorter than that of her sister.

In the west, on the Skibbereen circuit, a youth was led to religious decision, and since then he has rendered most important and valuable service to Irish Methodism. James H. Swanton had been in the habit of attending meetings in the house of his grandfather at Gortnagrough, and having heard that a service was about to be held by a queer man at Lisheenacrehig, he, accompanied by a Roman Catholic, went to hear the stranger, William Feckman. The word preached was accompanied with marvellous power; every one present seemed to be deeply impressed, and amongst others, young Swanton was awakened to a sense of his sinfulness and danger, and on his return home threw himself on his knees before the throne of mercy, and after some time realized peace and joy in believing. The Romanist, who also went to the

* Jubilee of the Methodist New Connexion, p. 169.

† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1824, p. 785.

service, subsequently emigrated to America, joined the Methodist Church, and died rejoicing in the Lord his Saviour.

The Rev. Robert Banks was appointed a supernumerary, and settled in Athy. The cause was then very low in the town, but now soon revived. There was a rent on the chapel of £3 or £4 per annum, which had been allowed to remain unpaid until it amounted to £40 or £50, due to the landlord, the Duke of Devonshire. Mr. Banks took this matter up, waited on his Grace when he came to the town, and laid the case before him. The Duke said he would look at the chapel, came down and entered it, took off his hat reverently, and at length said, "No claim shall be made for the amount due, and the rent in future shall be only twenty shillings per annum." The Sunday-school, held in the chapel, was under the superintendence of the Rev. Frederick S. Trench, one of the curates, while the other, the Rev. Mr. Bristow, frequently attended the preaching services, and even waited for class-meeting. When asked why he did so, he replied, "Many of my people go there, and I must hear what is said to them." Mr. Trench subsequently became narrow and exclusive in his views, and removed the school, so the Methodists separated from the Church, and prospered.

The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry was appointed to the Boyle and Killashandra circuit, where although there was much to discourage, the prospects soon began to brighten. In October he writes of "encouraging hopes of a revival," "great congregations," and "an unusual sense of the Divine presence," and in Carrick-on-Shannon, where a chapel had been erected two years previously, "a great outcry." A month later, he says, there was "no small stir" in several localities. "We have blessed prospects. The congregations are amazing, especially in Carrick-on-Shannon, and some have joined the class there every week, for some time. There is a marvellous move among the people."*

The Rev. Matthew Lanktree, sen., was appointed to the Ballymena mission, which included a considerable portion of the counties of Antrim and Derry, and found that while a few societies did well, the cause in general was low. Soon, however, the Lord revived His work. Indications of the approaching religious awakening first appeared in connection with the happy death of

* Life and Labours of Rev. F. Tackaberry, pp. 85-89.

Thomas Moore, one of the oldest leaders in the town. His mantle seemed to fall on the young people who knew him, several of whom joined the Society, and began to run for the prize of their high calling. A few backsliders also, who had wandered from God and withdrawn from association with His people, were restored to the joys of His salvation. At Bellaghy, Castledawson, and Magherafelt "blessed doors of usefulness were opened," and the Lord poured out His Spirit in converting power. To such an extent did the work increase and extend that an earnest application was made to the Missionary Committee for help. When this failed, recourse was made to prayer, that the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers, and not in vain. A Mr. John Peters joined the Society, took charge of a mission school, and rendered valuable help in conducting services in the neighbourhood of Carnlea. In Castledawson Mr. John Saul, then a revenue officer, came to the assistance of the missionaries, and proved a zealous labourer in the vineyard, and George Keevan, another local preacher, was also raised up. At Magherafelt the services were held in the school-house, an inconvenient place, in a narrow lane; but the Lord did not despise the day of small things, nor withhold His presence and blessing. The schoolmaster, Mr. James Seymour, preached with success, and Mr. Andrew Campbell,* who subsequently entered the ministry of the Established Church, began to exercise his talents with acceptance. The little thatched house of worship at Bellaghy became too small for the people who thronged to the services, and Providence opened the way for securing larger and better premises.†

The accounts furnished by the Primitive Wesleyan preachers, of their work, were encouraging. Mr. William Pattyson says that the September quarterly meetings at Newtownstewart, Strabane, and Fintona were largely attended and greatly acknowledged of God, so that at each souls were won for Christ. Such a blessed and cheering service as that at Fintona the itinerant had not attended during the thirteen years he had been a Methodist, while throughout the circuit there was a marked increase of vital godliness. On the Clones circuit Mr. John Mallin secured the services of an additional preacher, in order that he himself might be free to give himself wholly to missionary work. He was thus

* Son of the Rev. Archibald Campbell.

† Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 329-33.

enabled to open twenty-six new preaching-places, and to form six new classes, with about one hundred members. Amongst other places, the servant of God visited Cootehill, where the Society had no cause, preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house, and arranged for a service to be held every Sunday morning by one of the leaders, who travelled nine miles for that purpose.* The Society had for some time been looking out for a suitable site on which to erect a preaching-house in Monaghan, and at length having secured one, Mr. Richard Jackson built a neat and commodious chapel, at a cost of about three hundred pounds. Fourteen years previously a school was also erected in the town by this generous Christian gentleman. In 1821 he built a second and larger one, and some years subsequently he paid half the expense of building a chapel at Clontibret, the remaining portion being given by Mr. Andrew Swanzy.† The preaching-house at Monaghan was opened on Sunday, November 14th, by the Rev. Adam Averell.

At Portstewart a neat chapel was opened on Sunday, September 26th, by the Rev. Charles Mayne, who preached an excellent sermon, from Genesis xxviii. 17, to a large and deeply attentive congregation. This was the first place of worship built in the village, and was erected on a good site, which, with a handsome subscription, was the gift of Mr. John Cromie.‡

The Rev. George Morley, one of the general secretaries of the Missionary Society, having been appointed by the Conference to visit the mission-stations in Ireland, did so in October, and the following particulars are taken from his report: At Dunlavin, to which the Rev. Andrew Taylor had been appointed, on his entering on his work three months previously, there was not a chapel or room to preach in or a member to receive him; but now he preached in seven villages, had many attentive hearers, and twenty who met in class. At Killaloe and Kilrush two young men were diligently employed in preaching to eighteen congregations, many of whom otherwise would have been entirely neglected. On the Galway station each of the missionaries, the Revs. John Feely and James Sullivan, travelled more than two hundred and fifty miles each month, and preached to eighteen

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1824, pp. 364-65.
† *Ibid*, 1834, pp. 170-4.
‡ *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1825, p. 338.

congregations, with about five hundred hearers. During the quarter forty-three members had been admitted into the Society, and thirty on trial. At Banagher the Rev. Arthur Noble had nine congregations and four schools, with two hundred and sixty-six scholars, one hundred and forty-nine of whom were the children of Roman Catholic parents. At Trim Mr. Morley heard the general missionaries preach in the street, and says it was solemn and affecting to hear them read verse after verse of the 10th of Romans, Ouseley in the Douay, and John S. Wilson in the Authorized Version, while the former made comments on each passage.*

While Mr. Feely was on the above mission the following incident occurred: One day, on visiting the marble quarries at Oughterard, he was courteously received by a gentleman connected with the property, and shown many of the exquisite specimens. As he left, the missionary remarked, "This place reminds me of the New Testament." "How so?" inquired the other. "Because the exterior is plain and unpromising, but within it is full of wealth and beauty." This observation so impressed the gentleman that he invited the stranger to Oughterard House, where he was kindly and cordially received. Here, it soon appeared, a Romish ecclesiastic had also gained access, and ingratiated himself among the younger members of this Protestant family. One young lady in particular, under the persuasion that she must inevitably perish unless she belonged to the Catholic Church, he had all but won over to Popery. Mr. Feely not only disabused her mind, but furnished her with inquiries and arguments which the emissary of Rome was unable to answer, and thus an accomplished young lady was rescued from soul-destroying error, and won for Christ.†

Promoters of the circulation of the Word of God and of Scriptural education were now specially active. Public meetings were held in nearly every town and village, for the establishment of branches of the Bible Society or for the reception of annual reports, and at these services the speakers generally expatiated with great force on the claims of the sacred volume, the right of all to read it, and the importance of its universal diffusion.

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1824, pp. 857-58.
† *Irish Evangelist*, 1861, p. 145.

These statements were exceedingly grating to the Romish clergy, and the success of the circulators of the Word of God alarmed them, so the priests in various places attended the meetings and attempted to interrupt the proceedings. They were, in consequence, challenged to discuss the right and duty of the laity to search the Scriptures, and public disputations on the subject were held at Kilkenny, Carlow, Carrick-on-Shannon, Easky, and elsewhere. Ouseley was present, and assisted at Carrick-on-Shannon, but was not permitted by the priests to take any public part. The discussion at Easky took place in the Roman Catholic chapel, was continued for two days, and the speakers were three priests, two Scripture-readers, who had been Methodists, but were now employed by the Congregationalists, the Rev. Mr. M'Keague and the Rev. William Urwick. The results of these controversies were most favourable to the Reformed faith, as prejudices were removed, a spirit of inquiry awakened, and the demand for the Bible considerably increased. Of the discussion at Carrick-on-Shannon Ouseley says, "The effect was noble. That night not less than fifty Romanists came to hear me in our chapel, and the next night still more; and one of them, a merchant, said, 'Henceforth no priest shall hinder me from hearing the Bible; no, never.'"

During winter Mr. Ouseley, by direction of the Conference, visited Connaught and Munster, in reference to some chapels he had erected in these provinces, more especially one at Kilchreest, to regain possession of which he had to take legal proceedings. In Mayo several Romanists who had previously heard him preach in the streets now ventured into the house where he conducted services, and gladly listened again to the message of mercy. Some of these joined the Society, the attachment of others to their superstitions was shaken, and many appeared prepared for the reception of the truth. The servant of God was not, however, permitted to pursue his labours without opposition. At Monaghan, as he stood to preach, a fellow came towards him as if to hear, and then struck him so violently that respiration for a time was suspended. The ruffian then attempted to repeat the blow, but was seized by the people. When able to speak, Ouseley's first words were, "Do him no harm; he did it because he was drunk, and he will be sorry for it." At Kilrush the mob were urged to attack the missionary, by a bigoted priest,

who assured them that the law would not touch them. So when the servant of God attempted to preach he was received with loud shouts and a volley of stones. The police hastened to the spot, but they also were assailed, and, bruised and wounded, compelled to retire. The local magistrates held a court to investigate the cause of the riot and punish the rioters; but the priest entered, insulted the bench, and demanded an adjournment. This was granted, and on the following day a similar travesty of justice took place. Thus the magistrates were browbeaten at two sittings, and prevented from acting according to their view of what was right. It is worthy of note that this priest, though then apparently in perfect health, died soon afterwards, and this was regarded by many as a judgment from God.

CHAPTER VI.

1825.

During the early portion of 1825 Gideon Ouseley laboured chiefly in the counties of Cavan and Monaghan. As the Protestant population, in this part of the country, was about equal to that of the Roman Catholic, and the influence of the priests, on that account, less powerful, he preached with little interruption, and in general to large congregations. "My health and strength," he says, "continue unabated, though now in my sixty-fourth year, and I continue to preach in the markets, fairs, and streets, to listening crowds, when practicable." It is interesting to observe the ardour with which this veteran of the Cross prosecuted his arduous work. Every day, sometimes twice and thrice, he ministered the word of life. At one time we find him on horseback, away from the hurry and bustle of a market, yet where numbers of Romanists could hear him, at another time in the midst of a fair; in one place at the close of the day, by the light of a lamp, opening his commission to a large audience, and in another quarter singing in the moonlight, until "the people crept out and gathered round him," and he preached unto them Jesus. Nor did drizzling rain or bitter cold deter him from his work or deprive him of his congregations. On one occasion he rode into the market of Ballyjamesduff in very severe weather, and addressed a great concourse of people, chiefly Romanists. His text was John xx. 23, which afforded him an opportunity of dwelling at length on the claims of the priests to forgive sins, yet the people listened with remarkable attention. Not a frown was on any brow, seriousness appeared on each countenance, and during the concluding prayer every head was uncovered.*

* Reilly's Memorial of Ouseley, pp. 257-58.

The Revs. John Nelson and John Armstrong were stationed in Lurgan, where they had a gracious revival. It appears to have commenced with a service Mr. Armstrong held one Sunday afternoon in the street, at the close of which he announced the usual meeting in the evening, when the chapel was so full that even the pulpit stairs were occupied. Many new classes were formed, and a large number of members received into the Society. Of the March quarterly meetings Mr. Armstrong says, "God has been with us in them all, particularly last Sunday, at Bluestone. It was a day never to be forgotten; many found peace, and not a few were sanctified wholly. At our leaders' meeting in Lurgan about forty were present, the two preachers, and Mr. Johnston, the circuit steward. At the close we had the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Such a leaders' meeting, for love, harmony, and genuine piety, I never attended before. And such a soil for labour as this circuit I never was in previously. No matter where and when we preached, the crowd was great. We have added about two hundred to our Society since Conference, and we have also an increase of piety, zeal, and brotherly love amongst our leaders and members." *

Towards the close of 1823 a Primitive Wesleyan, named Robert Ruddy, had settled in this town, and began at once to work for Christ. He was a thatcher, worked all day at his trade, and held meetings in the evenings. These were so well attended that he hired a room for the services, invited the preachers from Tanderagee, and a class was soon formed, which increased rapidly. The court-house was secured next, and before the close of this year a chapel was erected, capable of seating four hundred and fifty persons, and opened by the Rev. Adam Averell. Within a little more than twelve months from the introduction of Primitive Methodism, eight flourishing classes were formed in the town and neighbourhood.

At Nenagh also a place for religious services was secured by a member of the Primitive Wesleyan Society, and fitted up with a desk and forms. The conducting of the meetings was left mainly in the hands of Miss Cambridge, who resided in the town, and after a few months' labour, writes, "The little congregations keep

* Unpublished Diary of Rev. J. Armstrong.

up, and are very attentive; I feel at home with them; but, alas! alas! Nenagh is a very dark and dead place." *

Mr. William Pattyson was stationed on the Newtownstewart circuit, where there was a very gracious revival, during which he estimated that not less than three hundred persons were savingly converted. At Carnkenny especially the work was of a most remarkable kind, many who had been very careless and ignorant being made "wise unto salvation." †

The Wesleyan Society on this circuit was likewise favoured with a similar season of refreshing. It commenced at a prayer-meeting conducted by the leaders at Drumclamph, during which the Holy Spirit was poured out so powerfully that several persons cried aloud for mercy, and refused to be comforted until God spoke peace to their souls. The services were continued, great numbers attended, and for several weeks in succession scarcely a meeting was held at which some were not awakened or made happy in God. The tidings of this blessed work spread throughout the neighbourhood, and with the good news the revival itself extended. In some instances pious farmers were obliged to leave their work in the fields, in order to pray with and comfort the mourners assembled in their barns. Of the March quarterly meeting the Rev. John Foster writes that he never before attended a service marked by such a display of the power of God, while at a place near Castlederg, at a similar meeting, "an unusual number of people were present, and the arm of the Lord was made bare in an extraordinary manner." Among the rest, five Roman Catholics were converted, and several young men, who engaged heartily in work for Christ, while in four months about two hundred members were added to the Society.‡

On Friday, June 24th, a new chapel was opened in Skull, by the Rev. Henry Deery; and although the day proved unfavourable, there was a crowded congregation, while a gracious influence rested on the whole assembly. This building cost only sixty pounds, but the roof was put on, free of all charge, by a young man named John Whitley, whose father's house was the principal stopping-place for the preachers in this neighbourhood, and who

* Memoir of Miss Cambridge, pp. 93-97.
† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1876, p. 21.
‡ *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1825, pp. 556-57.

himself had been converted a short time previously, and appointed a leader and local preacher. He was spared for more than sixty years to work for Christ and His cause, and then came to the grave in a full age, "like as a shock of corn cometh in, in its season." About twenty-six years had now elapsed from the introduction of Methodism into this district of country, and it is stated that there was no place in the south of Ireland in which the labours of the itinerants had been marked by deeper or more decided and hallowing results.* Such, indeed, was the success of the cause that the above chapel was scarcely completed when arrangements were made, and the consent of Conference obtained, for the erection of another preaching-house, in the adjoining village of Ballydehob, in which there was then no place of Christian worship.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference met on June 29th. The Rev. Adam Averell presided as usual, and Mr. Alexander Stewart was elected secretary. A small addition to the membership was reported, and the demand for increased ministerial work was such that seven candidates were admitted on trial. These included Thomas Pearce of Youghal and George Stewart and John Taylor of the Tanderagee circuit. A deputation from Yorkshire attended, and requested that preachers be sent to labour there. Accordingly, Daniel Macafee and William M'Conkey were appointed to Beverley and Hull; but this arrangement was not permanent, as the cause in England soon developed into an Independent church in Osborne street, Hull, of which William M'Conkey became the minister in charge. The missionaries, who had numbered only three, were increased to eight, one of whom, Richard Robinson, was appointed to St. John's, New Brunswick, but this appointment only continued for two years. From a letter received by the Conference from Youghal, it appeared that the cause there had greatly declined, the congregation had almost dwindled away, and the chapel was about to be seized and sold, to pay a heavy debt on it, when Mr. Thomas R. Guest, of Cork, interposed on behalf of the struggling society. Thus it was infused with new life, the claims on the house were adjusted, and the cause at once began to look up again.

The Rev. Richard Waddy made an extensive tour through the

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1825, p. 703.

country, which is thus gratefully acknowledged in the Address of the Irish to the British Conference: "His labours have been very great among our societies; he travelled extensively, preached frequently, and devoted his mind to the investigation of our affairs. He has pointed out various improvements, which, we trust, will be made, tending to make the families of the preachers more comfortable, the circuits themselves more prosperous, and the work of God deeper and more extensive. His clear statements and cogent reasonings have had a powerful influence on both preachers and people. Your excellent system of finance is better understood, and will, we expect, be brought into more general and successful operation. Most cordially do we thank you for having sent him, and most earnestly would we intreat that he may be permitted to visit us during the ensuing year."* The Rev. Robert Newton also rendered valuable service, by preaching to large congregations in Dublin, on Sunday, July 3rd, in the morning in Abbey Street Chapel, from Luke xv. 10, and in the evening in Whitefriar street, from Hebrews xiii. 9.

The Wesleyan Conference assembled in Cork, for the first time, on July 8th. About fifty ministers were present, including the Revs. Robert Newton, who presided, Dr. Adam Clarke, George Morley, Richard Waddy, and Valentine Ward. The Rev. Samuel Wood was elected secretary, and the Revs. James Irwin and John Stuart members of the Hundred, instead of the Revs. John Dinnen and Andrew Hamilton, sen., superannuated. Two ministers were reported as having died during the year—John Hamilton, who, worn down with protracted labours, ended his days in great peace; and James M'Kee, whose sufferings were severe, but whose consolations abounded, so that he rejoiced in hope of everlasting life. Two young men who had been on the list of reserve were received on trial—Frederick P. Le Maitre of Dublin and William Ricketts of Belfast. The latter travelled only one year in Ireland, removed to England, and was received into the itinerancy there. It was resolved that if a preacher should be wanted on any circuit between the intervals of Conference, application should be made to the Dublin superintendent, who should write to the President, giving the names on the list of reserve, and he should make the appointment. And it was also agreed upon that

* Minutes of the Irish Conference, ii., p. 193.

preachers on trial should preach at the May district meetings, selecting their own texts during the first three years, but furnished with a text by the chairman in the fourth year. Although the cause had suffered greatly from emigration, nearly one hundred members having been thus lost on one circuit only, and several societies broken up, there were tokens of both numerical and financial progress. The members of the Conference write, "Our difficulties have begun to lessen, and our perplexities to recede. The darkness which enveloped us is partially removed, and the dawn of a brighter day is visible. Our temporal concerns have assumed a more cheerful aspect, our spiritual state we know to be progressive, and many seals have been given to our ministry."

The public services in connection with the Conference were seasons of rich spiritual enjoyment, more especially the love-feast. The testimony borne by old George Howe was singularly interesting and effective. Almost blind and very feeble, he arose, leaning on two walking-sticks, while his countenance beamed with sacred joy. "Had I," said he, "a thousand hearts and a thousand tongues, they should all be engaged to love and proclaim my Jesus. He is All and in all. Here I have firm footing. Methodism is from heaven, and leads to heaven. I am surrounded by men of God, who are born from the skies. It was through them that God lighted my candle and kept it burning. By them I was delivered from blind guides and men-made ministers. Hallelujah! Glory to God that I have seen this day! It is a high day with me, my happiest day. Hosanna! hosanna in the highest!" While the servant of God thus spoke he was greatly affected, and before he concluded the whole congregation wept.

The Rev. Matthew Lanktree, sen., having heard that his son was seriously ill at Bandon, after the opening of Conference, hastened to see him, remained in the town a few days, and on Sunday preached in "the commodious and lovely chapel," feeling it to be a humbling and gracious season. When Conference concluded he returned again to the town, and found his son better, but his intended bride, Miss Beamish, alarmingly ill. She lingered a few days, and then calmly fell asleep in Jesus. She was a lovely character, and left behind her many precious memories. Matthew Lanktree, jun., after this double stroke of illness and bereavement, never regained his former health and vigour.

At this time there was in Bandon a young man of eighteen, named William Parker Appelbe, who from childhood had been accustomed to attend the Methodist services, and being remarkably thoughtful and studious, gave promise of a useful career. He had already distinguished himself for his knowledge of the Word of God, having for several years in succession won the silver medal in a local Bible-class, and thus laid the foundation of that love for the Scriptures which in after-years was such a marked feature in his character. Through the Divine blessing on a sermon preached in the Wesleyan chapel, he was led to religious decision, and from the memorable hour in which he realized peace and joy in believing, he never wavered in his Christian course. He at once joined the Society, being received as a member into Mr. Henry Cornwall's class, and continued in connection with it until 1828, when he entered Trinity College, Dublin. Of his subsequent career more again.

The Revs. James Johnston and Fossey Tackaberry were appointed to the Mountrath circuit, and through the Divine blessing on their self-denying and devoted labours, the work greatly prospered. On September 12th Mr. Tackaberry writes, "Last Sunday evening, in Mountmellick, two persons had to regulate the house, in order to get the people stowed into it; I never saw it so full before." And again, "We had a most blessed lovefeast on Tuesday last. Five or six professed to receive purity of heart. Mr. Johnston was sometimes so happy, in the course of the meeting, as to sit down in the pulpit, quite overcome." Thus did the presence of listening crowds, and especially of the Spirit of God, testify to the success of the word preached.

At Castlereagh, notwithstanding many difficulties, a neat and commodious chapel was erected, and at length opened for public worship by the Revs. William Reilly and Arthur Noble, by whom the work had been commenced two years previously. Considerable interest was attached to this event; there was a respectable attendance at the opening services; and considering the circumstances of the people, the contributions were liberal.* A number of years previously Methodism had been introduced into the town by a sister of the Rev. William Cornwall, Mrs. Cotton, who on her marriage invited the servants of God to her house. This excellent

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1825, p. 784.

woman was spared until almost the close of 1879, when, at the advanced age of ninety-four years, having seen her children to the fourth generation, she passed in holy triumph to the home above.*

The Revs. George Burrows and Robert Beauchamp were appointed to the Newtownstewart circuit, and the former says that the Lord granted them a continuation and extension of the blessed work which had begun in the preceding year at Drumclamph. There were numerous conversions, and much improvement in the piety and general order of the societies. The revival extended to Omagh, where many were led to religious decision. Arrangements were made with Mr. Samuel Galbraith, the landlord of the site on which the chapel in this town was built, by which he handed thirty pounds, due to him for rent, to the Society, as a subscription towards the erection of a minister's residence.

About ten years previous to this, Archibald M'Elwain, a native of Ballymena, settled in Coleraine, and having given his heart to God, through the instrumentality of Methodism, at once identified himself with the Society. He was a man of a truly devotional spirit, thoroughly attached to Methodist ordinances and institutions, and eminent for his regular attendance at the means of grace. He soon rose to a position of importance and influence, which he held for nearly half a century, and in which he did more than any other man then living, by his example, labours, prayers, and contributions, to promote the welfare and form the distinctive character of Methodism in the town.

At the time now under consideration a feeling of estrangement had arisen among the leaders, and to such an extent did it prevail that there was a hesitancy on the part of some of the ministers to undertake the responsibility of superintending the circuit. The Rev. Richard T. Tracy, however, was appointed, with the Rev. John Holmes as his colleague. They both remained in town for the first Sabbath, Mr. Holmes preaching in the morning, and Mr. Tracy in the evening. At the close of the latter service a prayer-meeting was held, at which the officials were set to work. To help in removing the want of harmony that existed, Mr. Tracy soon afterwards invited all the leaders and principal friends to his own house for tea. At first, when they came in, there was some

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1880, p. 592.

shyness; but as the house filled, the hearty welcome, the cheerful room, and the encouragement given to free social intercourse did their work, until the spell was completely broken, and there was such a meeting as had not been in Coleraine for years. It proved to be the beginning of better days; the public services and classes were more largely attended, and God granted His abundant blessing. There was a gracious revival and much spiritual prosperity. So deeply interesting and profitable were the services that at times it was difficult to bring them to a close. On one lovefeast occasion the chapel was open all day and all night, so that many of those present went direct from the meeting, on the following morning, to open their shops for business.

At this time there was an infidel club in the town, which exerted a pernicious influence even on some members of the congregation. The preachers declared war against this ungodly association. Mr. Tracy first intimated his willingness to converse on the questions in dispute, with any willing to speak to him. He then lent them suitable books, and finding that he was gaining ground, took courage, and published that he would preach a series of sermons on the evidences of Christianity and the folly and immoral tendencies of infidelity. For several Sabbath evenings the chapel was filled so full that some persons could not obtain admission. The result was that the club was broken up and the members scattered, some joining the Society. The leader soon afterwards, when under the influence of drink, fell off a coach, was severely hurt, and for some time confined to bed. He was visited by some members of the Society, who admonished him and prayed with him, and there was reason to think, not in vain.

There had been for some years in Coleraine a bad practice which the ministers succeeded in effectually stopping. On the Sabbath afternoon, between the two services elsewhere, people were accustomed to come to the neighbourhood of the preacher's residence for lunch, and some of the young persons to play pitch and toss. Mr. Mayne used to speak to them and give them tracts, but it was of no avail. He was only the Methodist preacher! Mr. Tracy, having tried a word of counsel in vain, went to the Mayor, and arranged with him that the police should interfere, which they did; the Sabbath-breakers were compelled to fly, and

did not return to their former habit. For this act Mr. Tracy received public thanks.

The first notice of a public tea-meeting that we have come across was in Ballymena, on August 19th, when about forty were present in the chapel, and the evening was spent in religious conversation, the subject being chiefly Philippians ii. 16. Five months later, Mr. Lanktree writes from this mission testifying to the success of Mr. Saul's labours at Castledawson: "Many, through his instrumentality, have been brought into the Society and are converted to the Lord. Upwards of fifty young people are meeting in class, and many of them are happy in God. The congregations are large and attentive, and a regenerating influence has gone forth. We held a large meeting here on the 25th of September, and having no chapel, we had recourse to a sort of tent, and the presence and blessing of Jehovah were powerfully felt. Upwards of two hundred persons attended the lovefeast, at the close of which the pardoning mercy of God our Saviour was richly dispensed, which several freely acknowledged."

Mr. Ouseley, immediately after Conference, resumed his self-denying and earnest labours, into the details of which it is unnecessary to enter, except to say that they were intense and unremitting. At Newry he remained about two weeks, preaching twice each day, and the word was accompanied with Divine power to many. In one instance, having preached in the open air, the Romanists who were present followed him into the court-house, and listened with deep attention. On another day they followed him into the chapel. And on a third occasion, as he in the street plainly and faithfully exposed the errors of their system, they "were as silent as night," and appeared greatly impressed. Several of them were heard to say, "My heart trembles." "I tremble all over since I heard this doctrine." "It is quite true: I must quit my sins; I must curse and swear no more." In the market of Cootehill "the congregation was immense." Some Romanists, while the missionary was absent, had posted challenges to dispute with him, but when he appeared there was no one to come forward against him in this way. At Carrickmacross, where the preachers had ceased visiting for two or three years, a friendly clergyman said to Ouseley that he would not get a dozen people to listen to him; but when the missionary took his stand near the

market-house, and began to speak, a large and attentive audience collected, and followed him into the building, and when he had done they poured blessings on his head.*

Ouseley, accompanied by John Feely, made a tour of nearly a month, this winter, on the Galway mission, and although the weather was very severe, persevered in preaching in the open air. While engaged in this way in the market of Oughterard, two priests came up and commanded the people to leave; but only a few paid any attention to their mandate, the remainder continuing to listen with devout attention. The missionaries then proceeded to one of the mission schools, and on crossing a little river were both plunged into the water. As Ouseley puts it, "Down went my mare suddenly, and while she plunged, off I tumbled. Brother Feely rode up quickly to my assistance, but down he and his little Rosinante went. Having gathered ourselves up, nothing hurt that signified; we got to our place at Mr. Lyons'." The poor people were delighted to hear him, while he preached on "Fear not, little flock." One man, who, for fear his life would be taken, had gone to mass, was led to see the folly of this step; another cried out, "I never knew my religion until now;" while a poor Roman Catholic woman, who had been awakened and led to the Saviour fifteen years previously, and still retained her love for Christ, came running with delight to meet once more her father in the Gospel. At Dunmore, Ouseley was hooted and vilified, in a most indecent manner, by the parish priest, whose character was held in deserved contempt, even by his own people. At Mullingar, as the missionary preached beside the market-house, a heavy missile was thrown at his head, but providentially missed the mark. Although many heard the word with gladness, others shouted and yelled, so that the police with difficulty kept the peace. However, they seized the assailant, and lodged him in jail for the night; but Ouseley declined to lodge informations, and thus the persecutor was allowed to escape.

Early in December the Rev. John Armstrong refers to preaching three times on one day in Waringstown—in the morning in the Presbyterian meeting-house, in the afternoon to children, and again in the evening. The congregations, he says, were large, although the Wesleyan cause was feeble in the town,

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1826, pp. 135-36.

the new Primitive Wesleyan chapel was opened on the same day, and a crowd was present there.

About a fortnight later, the zealous itinerant held a love-feast at Banbridge—"a good meeting, and much of the power of the Lord was felt"—and at night preached to a full house, and formed a new class of about twenty members. "We have," he says, "in this town many warm friends, and none more so than John Love and his lovely family, six of whom meet in class."

At this period William Smyth, of Downpatrick, a member of the Primitive Wesleyan Society, removed to Belfast, where he commenced a Young Men's Association, which met in his own house, and consisted of twenty or thirty members, many of whom were converted in connection with their meetings, and several subsequently were called into the ministry of the Methodist or the Episcopal Church.

Mr. William Browne was appointed by the Primitive Wesleyan Conference to Manorhamilton, and his colleague having left him, Mr. John Thompson, of the Enniskillen circuit, was sent to his assistance. The Lord poured out His Spirit abundantly on several parts of this extensive field, and many souls were won for Christ. Amongst those thus led to religious decision were Henry Geddes and John Heatley,* of Florence Court, both of whom subsequently entered the itinerancy, and were much owned of the Lord.

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* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, p. 100.

CHAPTER VII.

1826.

On January 1st, 1826, a new Primitive Wesleyan chapel, in Summer hill, Dublin, was opened by the Rev. Adam Averell. There was a large audience; the text was Isaiah ii. 2,* and the collection amounted to £34. This house consisted of an old building, which had been secured, enlarged, and fitted up, and had been rendered necessary for the accommodation of members of the Society on the north side of the city. This was the ninth Methodist chapel erected or purchased in the metropolis.

Very soon after the opening of this house, the Society had to mourn over the loss of one of its most devoted and efficient office-bearers, Mr. Bennett Dugdale. As a leader and local preacher, his talents were of a high order, and sanctified by Divine grace, rendered him exceedingly useful. When the division took place he espoused the cause of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism, and at the request of his brethren, laid the foundation-stone of the chapel in South Great George's street. Mr. Averell availed himself of the opportunity afforded by his visit to the city to call on his old friend, who said to him, "I cannot tell you the delightful views with which I have been favoured since I came to lie on this bed. I shall soon be with my Saviour, and with those with whom I often took sweet counsel on earth." It was as he anticipated, for in a few days, in this spirit of calm and triumphant hope, he exchanged mortality for endless life.

A very blessed revival took place on the Maguiresbridge and Brookeborough circuit. Mr. John Buttle had charge of this laborious field, and soon after arriving there, saw cheering tokens of increased spiritual life in the leaders and members, and arrangements were made for special prayer, three times each

* The sermon is published in the *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1826, pp. 7—18.

day, for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At length, on March 17th, during a service at Killymendon, near Ballinamallard, the power of God descended, so that many were cut to the heart, and cried aloud for mercy. The meetings were continued each night, large numbers attended, and a great many were brought into glorious liberty. The good work soon extended to other parts of the circuit. Fivemiletown, Maguiresbridge, Ballinamallard, and Irvinestown all partook in succession of these showers of blessing, until the wilderness became a fruitful field, and the fruitful field was counted for a forest.* Amongst those converted was a young man, named Hugh Monahan,† of Ballinamallard, who was spared for nearly forty years to labour for Christ and His cause. Young Monahan began his work at home, and soon every member of the family was led to the Saviour, while one at least became a devoted and consistent leader

Early in this year, Gideon Ouseley had an attack of illness, arising from exposure, by which he was confined to the house for six weeks. But though prevented from public exercises, he was by no means idle, for he was busy with his pen. Indeed, he considered it a great mercy to have been brought into affliction, as it gave him opportunities of prosecuting his work in another way, not less effectual than the preaching of the word. He published some tracts, which he partly compiled from a series of letters which had appeared in the *Galway Journal* and other provincial papers, and had been read with such avidity that in some instances they had been printed a second time. These pamphlets included "Strictures on the Pope's Jubilee Bull and its Doctrines," "The Pope's Faith necessarily Condemns Christ and His Followers," "The Blessed Virgin Vindicated from the Defamation of the Priests," "A Reply to a late Speech of the Rev. Mr. Clowry, a Roman Catholic Priest of Carlow, against the Bible and Bible Reading," and "Three Letters to Prove that Dr. Doyle cannot Believe that the Protestants are Heretics, nor that the Church of Rome is the True and Ancient Faith of Christ. The Secret Cause of all Papal Persecution." To these powerful assaults on Popery no defence was attempted, as Ouseley himself says,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1827, pp. 240-42.
† Father of Rev. W. B. Monahan.

"There has not been a single tittle of reply from the priests, even in Galway."

Many facts might be narrated to show that these literary labours were not in vain. Thus, in Queen's County, Ouseley met an intelligent young man, who had abandoned Popery, and who said that when he first read some of these tracts he was astonished beyond measure; then he procured more of them, and thus became enlightened as to the truth. In this same county, Ouseley was invited to tea by an amiable and pious clergyman of the Established Church, and informed not only that it was owing to the missionary's conversation with him he had been led to the knowledge of religion, but also that a short time previously, amongst a number of persons who, in the county of Galway, had read their recantation of Popery, was a gentleman whose appearance excited surprise. On being asked how he came to be enlightened, he replied, "I shall tell you freely. I was educated for the priesthood, and became the editor of a newspaper. Mr. Ouseley came into the town, and put an article into the Protestant paper on the subject of Transubstantiation. I deemed it my duty to reply to him and upset his arguments, but in vain, for he upset me, and I then saw my foundation was altogether false." Ouseley inserted an article in the *Kerry Evening Post*, proving that no Protestant or Test Act could possibly denounce the dogmas of Rome more than the priests themselves are sworn to do, and boldly challenged a disproof of his statement. A Roman Catholic student having read this, went to hear the missionary preach, and told him he had seen the article, and considered it conclusive. Shortly afterwards this young man read his recantation in the church, wrote five letters in vindication of his change, and became a teacher of the truth.

In the county of Longford there was a young man of nineteen, actively engaged in Christian work, whose name, Robert Huston, will frequently appear on the following pages. He was a native of Ballinasloe; his mother was a godly Methodist from Castlebar, and his father a soldier in the North Mayo militia. Robert was now residing in Street, and having been deeply impressed on the subject of religion, chiefly through the Divine blessing on the influence of his devoted mother, resolved, on the first day of this year, to join the Society. The leader was a rough

Scotchman, pious, with but slender gifts, and held the situation of butler to the clergyman of the parish. Intent on the enjoyment of his privileges, it was enough to provoke a smile when, as his class-hour arrived one Sunday morning, the Methodist official unceremoniously poked his head into the parlour, where the family were at breakfast, and exclaimed, "May I go noo?" "I have no objection," said his master, "that you should hear the preachers, but I don't like this class-meeting." With uncouth candour, the butler answered, "No, nor the devil naythor, sir." This reply, more frank than prudent, clerical dignity could ill brook, so the servant did not long retain his place. Within three months of becoming a member of the class of this earnest leader, young Huston was enabled to believe that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned his sins, and then entered upon a course of extensive and protracted usefulness. One of those who proved most helpful to the young convert was Mr. James Mills of Granard, father of the Revs. Thomas and Samuel Mills, the one Rector of St. Jude's, Dublin, and the other of a parish in England. Mr. Mills was eminently holy and warmly attached to Methodism, though not always able to enjoy its privileges. Mighty in the Scriptures, powerful in prayer, and thoroughly trained in the school of Christian experience, his friendship was most valuable. Counselled and encouraged by him, Robert Huston went from house to house to pray, and from place to place to hold meetings. When an occasional blunder or failure was used by the adversary to urge an entire cessation from these efforts, some such seasonable reply to the tempter was suggested by Mr. Mills as, "True, Satan, I am only a blunderer at best, but I'll blunder on as well as I can."

On May 17th a newly erected chapel at Ballinasloe was opened for Divine service, by the Rev. Samuel Wood. A large congregation, including both Roman Catholics and Protestants, was present, while some, unable to find accommodation, were obliged to go away. It was a day of great rejoicing, and many felt that they were indeed "in the house of God and at the gate of heaven."

A new chapel, being the fifth built in Belfast, was also erected at Ballymacarret, chiefly through the exertions of the Rev. Alexander Mackey. A small piece of ground was secured, in connection with it, as a graveyard, in which not a few ministers and

their wives and children, with many of the early Methodists of Belfast, sleep till the morning of the resurrection. At a leaders' meeting held on May 29th it was resolved "that worship be regularly established at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and at five o'clock in the afternoon," on each Sabbath, in this new chapel.

On the Ballymena mission the Rev. Matthew Lanktree, sen., reports considerable success, in an increase in the membership, the number of Christian workers, and the accommodation for hearing the word; school-houses, session-houses, and meeting-houses having been placed at the disposal of the Society. At Magherafelt an excellent site for erecting a chapel and school-house was secured from the lord of the soil; at Castledawson subscriptions were in forwardness for building a chapel; and at Bellaghy a house was purchased, which could easily be fitted up to accommodate a good congregation, while no less than six hundred children received instruction in schools and classes for catechumens.

A new chapel was also opened at Billy, the history of which is noteworthy. Seven years previously the foundation-stone was laid by the Rev. James Johnston, and during the service a careless sinner, who happened to pass that way, was awakened to a sense of his state, laid hold of Christ, and joined the Society. Owing, however, to bad harvests, extensive emigration, and other causes, the building remained unfinished, but good Mrs. M'Curdy continued to make it the subject of special prayer. During the Rev. Charles Mayne's visit to England, in 1824, he remembered this discouraging case, mentioned it to some generous friends, and thus obtained pecuniary aid. At the same time, unknown to Mr. Mayne, one of the local preachers, Mr. John Martin, was led to solicit subscriptions in the vicinity, and their united efforts led to the completion of the work. The Rev. Matthew Lanktree conducted the opening service, preaching from Haggai ii. 9; the Rev. Charles Mayne discoursed in the afternoon of the same day from Zechariah vi. 12, 13; and the Rev. James B. Gillman occupied the pulpit in the evening, and selected Psalm xxvi. 8 as his text. The Lord's Supper was also administered, to about one hundred and fifty communicants. "It was," says Mr. Lanktree, "altogether a precious season, and the unction of the Holy Spirit attended the word preached."

The Rev. Thomas Edwards gives a cheering report of his

charge. He says that there were twenty schools, with fourteen hundred and seventy-nine scholars. In their general appearance the children exhibited increased order, stability, and efficiency; many were more cleanly in their persons, more orderly in their manners, and much improved in their morals. In reading and writing also there was considerable improvement, and in arithmetic some progress, while the children excelled in spelling. In many of the schools considerable portions of the Scriptures had been committed to memory, and catechetical instruction had been attended to. Nearly all the children above infancy could repeat the Lord's Prayer, and were accustomed to pray every night and morning. The teachers had conducted themselves to the satisfaction of Mr. Edwards, who knew of no instance in which their conduct had not met the approbation of the parents, and secured in general the respect of the inhabitants, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, in the districts in which they lived.

The Conference of the Primitive Wesleyans commenced on June 28th. William Fleming, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months; and four candidates were admitted on trial—John Ramsey of Dublin, Thomas Boyce of Tanderagee, James Herbert of Moybane, and John Thompson. There was one death, that of the youthful and devoted Samuel Rogers, whose last words were, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." And the increase in the number of members amounted to six hundred and thirty-five, many of them being the first-fruits of missionary labours.

The Wesleyan Conference began its sittings in Dublin on July 3rd, under the presidency of the Rev. Joseph Entwisle, who was accompanied by the Revs. Jonathan Barker and George Morley; and the Rev. Andrew Hamilton jun., was appointed secretary. There were received on trial six candidates, including John Greer of Rathmelton; James Henry of Clonmel; John Harrington, Thomas T. N. Hull, and John Saul. The Revs. Archibald Murdock, James Bell, and William Stewart were elected members of the Legal Hundred, instead of the Revs. William M'Cornock, Thomas Kerr, and Francis Armstrong, superannuated. The increase in the number of members was four hundred and thirty-seven, a considerable part of which had taken place in comparatively neglected districts of the country, occupied by the

missionaries. There was one death reported, that of the venerable Thomas Barber, who had closed his useful career "in the full assurance of hope." It was resolved that superintendents should bring accounts of the societies on their respective circuits to the May district meetings, instead of the Conference, as was customary previously; that no petition for the appointment of a preacher to a circuit should be received unless agreed to at a quarterly meeting of the stewards and leaders; and that no preacher should be appointed to a circuit a third year unless a petition for his return from the quarterly meeting be presented to the Conference.

Previous to this year, pastoral addresses had been sent occasionally by the Conference to the societies; but now it was resolved that this should be done every year. Although the Address for 1826 is not published in the Minutes, a copy lies before us, and from it we learn that the design of adopting this resolution was to afford members of the Society the earliest and fullest information respecting the affairs of the Connexion, and to offer such pastoral advice as its state and circumstances might suggest as suitable and necessary. It is stated, "In reviewing the whole body of our Connexion, it comforts our hearts to be enabled to declare that it exhibits to our view at present a more settled and promising aspect of spiritual health, vigour, and prosperity than at any period within the last eight years."

As to financial affairs, they also presented a more cheering aspect than they had done for some time, for donations from preachers and friends in England were sent, to the amount of upwards of £655, in addition to £270 granted by the Conference towards the education of the children of supernumeraries. Special appeals, however, to ministers and friends on the other side of the Channel could not be continued, and therefore the Irish representatives to the British Conference, the Revs. Matthew Tobias and Thomas Waugh, brought forward the subject in Liverpool, before a number of leading ministers, at a breakfast-meeting specially convened for that purpose. Exception was taken to the form in which the accounts had been published, and an improved mode was sketched by the Rev. Jabez Bunting, and placed in the hands of the Rev. Joseph Entwistle, who introduced the subject to the Conference The Irish representatives then spoke at considerable length, and succeeded in making such an impression that a resolution to the

effect that the Irish Connexion should no longer be dependent on subscriptions, but have a yearly grant of £600 from the Contingent Fund, was carried unanimously. The Rev. Henry Moore said to Mr. Waugh afterwards, "Now I see we shall be altogether one again. I had not hoped for it, but felt, from the moment you set out, that you had a good wind." And another minister expressed his conviction that he never before had seen such an impression, in favour of Ireland, made on the Conference.

There was, however, a debt of more than £6,000 on the Irish Connexion, chiefly contracted by making up deficiencies in the allowances to preachers. This, with the injudicious zeal of many persons in different places, building chapels and ministers' residences, without sufficient means, swelled the amount, in 1823, to £8,286. To remove the terrible pressure of this debt, the interest of which swallowed up annually a large portion of the Connexional funds, a committee was formed in Dublin to remove or lessen it, and also to establish local committees on different circuits to co-operate with them for the same purpose. Accordingly, at a leaders' meeting held in Belfast on September 19th, the case was stated by Mr. William Kent of Dublin, the deputation, additional information was given by the ministers of the circuit, the Revs. William Reilly and Matthew Lanktree, jun., and a committee appointed to assist in carrying out this project; but nothing further appears to have been done then.

Of the Carlow circuit, on which the Rev. Thomas T. N. Hull was stationed, he says that in the town of Carlow the cause was low, there being only one family outside of the Society that attended the services, and they only occasionally. At Coolbaun, where a neat chapel had been erected, and at Gurteen, there were large congregations and much right good feeling. At Athy the attendance was moderate, while at Mr. Barker's of Knockatomcoyle, a few miles from Hacketstown, there was remarkable and cheering success. On Mr. Hull's first visit no one came to the service; but gradually, with each subsequent meeting, the congregations increased, until parlour, kitchen, hall, and staircase were crowded with earnest hearers. Then the young preacher announced that he would bring a class-book, read the rules of the Society, and form a class of those who desired to flee from the wrath to come. When the appointed time arrived, and an invita-

tion to remain was given to anxious inquirers, about twenty responded; and out of the blessed work thus commenced were several who as leaders and local preachers did good service for Christ and His cause, both in this country and in America.

Mr. Ouseley writes from Cavan, with great delight, stating that he had seen the church crowded, and sixty-three Romanists recanting the errors of Popery, making two hundred and fifty-seven in all, and that he also had heard the Rev. Richard T. P. Pope address a large audience for two hours. The Reformation movement, as it was called, was then proceeding in this neighbourhood, and owed much to the influence of Lord and Lady Farnham, whose guest the missionary occasionally was, and with whom he corresponded, holding them in hearty respect. Public discussions between Protestant and Romish champions were continued, and were very popular. One, which was to have taken place at Londonderry, appears to have had a particular interest for Ouseley. He feared beforehand that the Catholics would flinch, and this proved to be the case. When he visited the city, immediately afterwards, he states that the fact of the priests having done so "opened their people's eyes, so that they came in great crowds to hear." Shortly after this, in a ball-room at Dundalk, he preached to a great crowd, among whom was the truly noble and good Lord Roden, with his family, "and an immense mass of the lower orders, although the priests had been threatening them." At the close a political speaker created a disturbance, but the missionary was escorted home in safety.*

In the market of Ballyjamesduff, as Ouseley discoursed to a great crowd, on Galatians i. 8, 9, showing that there is but one infallible standard, all listened with deep attention. A schoolmaster present, having requested to be shown the Testament of the preacher, and seeing that it was the Rhemish version, marked Matthew vi. 5, "And when ye pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets," and handed it back, expressing a desire that it should be read aloud. Ouseley at once complied, read also chapter v. 16, "So let your light shine before men," etc., and marked Acts xvii. 17, requesting the schoolmaster to read it. He did so, repeating audibly, "He disputed therefore in the

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 238-39.

synagogue with the Jews, and with them that served God, and in the market-place every day with them that were there," and exclaimed, "I declare, sir, here is a contradiction." "What?" said the missionary, "a contradiction in your own book! No, my dear fellow, the contradiction is in your head, not in the book. The doing good works in secret has regard to motive, that of pleasing God with a single eye; the command to let them appear before men, as did Paul, is for an example to men, to lead them to good." "Sir," replied the man, "I am very thankful to you; I never understood this before." And the crowd dispersed, apparently well pleased.

Next day Ouseley went to Killashandra, rode into the market, and was soon surrounded by a large audience, to whom he preached from Mark vii. 7, pointing out the guilt of giving human inventions, instead of the pure Gospel. "But who does that, sir?" inquired an old grey-headed man. "I shall soon tell you," replied the preacher, and proceeded to show many of the changes made by the Pope and his clergy on the teaching of the Word of God. Every one present listened with profound attention, and all joined devoutly in the concluding prayer. The missionary then announced that he would preach on the following day, in the market of Arvagh, on "Beware of false prophets." Many flocked to hear, and afterwards, when talking with each other about the sermon, one inquired, "Why was there no one to oppose him?" "Oppose him, you fool!" said another: "the devil could not beat him." "No, thank God," said Ouseley; "I rejoice to reply, for greater is He that is for me." "What are you doing here?" said a woman to her husband, "listening to that man? don't you know how it will be?" "Hold your tongue," he answered. "I am listening to the truth, if ever truth was told, and stand you here and hearken to it too." At Kingscourt the missionary preached on the Ancient Faith to a large number of Romanists, who manifested great interest and feeling. One of those present came with deep emotion next morning to the preacher's lodgings, and told him that he had had a sleepless night, that he intended to follow no other faith than that of God and Jesus Christ, and added, "But God help us, what are we taught?" Another Roman Catholic, who was present on the previous day, said to her husband, "I never understood my religion before, and with the mass I have

done for ever." At Eyrecourt, as Ouseley preached to a street full of Romanists and Protestants, the parish priest took alarm, and came running out of his chapel to disperse the hearers; but they were very tardy in moving. The missionary then said, "Your priest tells you, and very truly too, that to oppose the known truth is to sin against the Holy Ghost and destroy your souls. But you know well, as must he, that what I am speaking is God's truth, therefore in thus opposing it he comes forth to commit this very sin himself." The priest soon afterwards disappeared.

During summer, Miss Lutton visited Newcastle, in the county of Down, for change and sea-bathing. After a short time spent in quiet and rustic seclusion, some of the residents of the village discovered that the stranger was no ordinary visitor, and requested her to hold a meeting. She consented, and the drawing-room in which the service was conducted, as well as the hall, was closely packed. "We had lovely singing," says Miss Lutton, "and the piano was skilfully touched." This led to other requests of a similar kind, and then to additional services, which were much owned of God. Several titled ladies were amongst the listeners on these occasions, and one of them at least was led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross, and enabled to go forth without the camp, bearing the reproach of Christ.

At Bushmills a new chapel was opened on October 22nd; the services conducted by the Revs. Richard T. Tracy and John Saul, were seasons of gracious visitation, and the collections and subscriptions were sufficient to meet all demands, so as to leave the building free of debt. The entrance-gates were a novelty in ecclesiastical architecture, being suspended on two pentagonal basaltic pillars, which were fair specimens of those which form the Giant's Causeway. There were then in this village good congregations, a promising society, and a Sunday-school.

At Bellaghy the new preaching-house was opened on November 12th. The Rev. Matthew Lanktree, jun., preached in the morning, from Hebrews i. 1—3, the Rev. John Saul in the afternoon, from 1 Thessalonians i. 5, and the Rev. Matthew Lanktree, sen., in the evening, from Psalm xcvi. 9. The congregations were very large, and the presence and blessing of God were richly manifested.

In Lurgan the chapel erected in 1802 having proved too small for the increasing congregations, and being in bad repair, it

was resolved to erect a larger and better edifice. Accordingly, Mr. John Johnston purchased some adjoining tenements, at a cost of one hundred guineas, which he generously presented to the Society, and a new house was built, partly on the site of the old one, and partly on the additional ground. On August 24th this chapel was opened for Divine worship, by the Rev. Samuel Wood, who preached in the forenoon, and the Rev. Alexander Mackey, who preached in the evening. The discourses were appropriate and impressive; a gracious influence rested on the congregations; and the collections, including those on the following Sabbath, amounted to upwards of fifty pounds.

At Enniskillen the chapel in what was then called Preaching lane, but now Wesley street, was a very primitive structure. The entrance was through "the preachers' lodgings;" a gallery was at one end, the pulpit at the other; there were two rows of backless seats, with centre aisle; the men sat at one side, and the women at the other; and the roof was thatch. The building was lit at night by means of two rude chandeliers, the candles of which were carefully snuffed, during the collection, by William M'Arthur,* a young apprentice in the town, who thus early in life endeavoured to make himself useful. This simple structure having proved unsuitable to the increasing requirements of the society, it was pulled down, and a new chapel erected in its place, chiefly through the exertions of Mr. Hugh Copeland.

The labours of the preachers of the Primitive body were also owned of the Lord. Soon after the meeting of Conference, the Rev. Adam Averell was invited to open a new chapel in Cookstown, and made his going thither the occasion of taking a lengthened tour through that part of the kingdom, and thus did a good work. He was not long at home, when he was requested to open another new house in Belturbet. In October Mr. Addy writes that the congregations in Cookstown had increased fourfold since the chapel was opened, while a new opening had been secured at Stewartstown, where after having preached thirteen or fourteen times in the street, a society was formed, and the market-house obtained for the services. Concerning the Ballyshannon circuit, Mr. James Robinson reports that there were forty classes, ninety lodging-places, and three chapels—one in Bundoran, which

* The late Sir William M'Arthur, K.C.M.G.

had been erected during the year, another in Ballyshannon, and a third in Ballintra. Mr. William Herbert, sen., who was appointed to Enniskillen, states that the congregations on his circuit were everywhere increased, in some places gracious outpourings of the Spirit took place, and the fruits of a revival that had begun in Knockmanoul were permanent, about forty having been led to the Saviour, and continued to adorn their profession. At Maguiresbridge it appeared that the good work commenced in the previous year continued to progress and extend, while a new preaching-house in Ballinamallard was nearly completed. Mr. George Washington of Skibbereen says that he regularly visited Clonakilty, Bantry, Dunmanway, and Ballyneen, and hoped to be able to form classes in each; but that his chief success was in Macroom, where he was cordially received, large congregations assembled to hear the word preached, and a society of thirty members was formed.

CHAPTER VIII.

1827.

Mr. William Feckman continued his devoted labours, which were accompanied with marked success. His style was attractive, though very homely. When excited, he would rub down his head and face with both hands, and say again and again, "Hear that." In his appeals he charged sins on one and another, by name, thus: "But some of you will say, 'I have nothing to repent of.' Have you nothing to repent of, James? Nor you, Tom? Nor you, John? Nothing to repent of! Don't you remember going to the pit, taking out the potatoes, and selling them? You will be weighed in the balance of the sanctuary yet; hear that. And you, Jane, have you nothing to repent of? Balaam's ass spoke, and if the lock of the barn could speak, what would it say? It would tell the times when you got the key, opened it, and stole the oats." Such appeals often brought home sinful acts, and resulted either in some kind of restitution or earnest efforts on the part of the self-accused to clear themselves. At a meeting in a farmer's house, not far from Dunmanway, a stubborn, harsh-looking girl attended, and her appearance attracted Mr. Feckman's attention. During the application of his remarks he walked over to her, charged her in detail with the sins of her life, and she fell motionless to the floor. Some water was brought to sprinkle her face, but the preacher said, "Let her alone; let the devil come out of her;" and after a little time, the poor girl recovered her senses, became penitent, and obtained the blessing of pardon, so that thenceforward she lived a consistent Christian life.

Mr. Feckman was untiring in his itinerancy, which was especially throughout the south and west of Cork. It is no exaggeration to assert that there was not a town, village, hamlet or Protestant farmstead, in that district of country, where his

name was not a household word. Hundreds were converted through his instrumentality, and thousands benefited by his ministry. Occasionally he left Cork for a few months, though once his absence extended to two years, and on another occasion to four. Roscrea, Nenagh, Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Ballinasloe, Limerick, and parts of Kerry were visited in turn, several weeks being devoted to each place.

Many of the converts held fast, and witnessed a good confession, but some fell away. A farmer, near Skull, at whose house meetings had been held, thus became a backslider. Mr. Feckman went to the house of this friend, who had just come in to dinner, and with coat off, was sitting in the kitchen, when he observed the evangelist coming, and instantly ran out by the back door. Mr. Feckman followed, succeeded in catching him, and held him fast, saying, "I arrest thee, the prisoner of the Lord." The man, conscious of his guilt, fell upon his knees, crying, "Have mercy on me! Oh, if you had been here I would not have fallen! Can I be saved?" "Come into the house," said Mr. Feckman, "and we will plead with God." They did so; the poor prodigal, overwhelmed with grief and shame, cried unto God, "who willeth not the death of a sinner," and his backsliding was healed, so that he thenceforth lived a pious and useful life.

In his intercourse with families Feckman wielded great influence. He made himself acquainted with the name of every member of the household, and seldom failed at family worship to implore a blessing on each one. These prayers appeared to be inspired, and while they were offered it was felt that the place was holy ground.

He was a man of one book, for he seldom read anything but the Bible, except the Methodist Hymn-book. He made it his habit to talk to persons about their spiritual welfare, and this was so well understood that those who felt averse to such conversation often made an effort to avoid meeting him. In whatever neighbourhood he sojourned he visited from house to house, and would say sometimes to strangers, "Come and hear a man preach who was twice born," or "Come and listen to a man who was raised from the dead." Passion for the salvation of souls often led him to places where he had wretched accommodation and very humble fare. A poor man who had received spiritual benefit

through his instrumentality said once to him, "I wish I had a place to entertain you." The reply was, "If you can give me potatoes and milk, and there are sinners in your neighbourhood, I will gladly go."

Early in 1827 we find traces of this devoted evangelist in the neighbourhood of Limerick, where he writes, "The Lord has in a most wonderful manner poured out His Spirit on this circuit. Some Sundays fifteen will join the Society, most of whom give clear and satisfactory evidence of their acceptance with God. I met thirty-eight in class last Sunday, all of whom had found peace, except six. Nearly one hundred have been added to the Society in these places. There is no meeting at which sinners are not pardoned. People come five, and sometimes ten miles, seeking pardon. I never beheld such a work in all my life. Glory to God for this, His own work! The young, the old, and the middle-aged are led to give their hearts to God. I received a letter from the preacher on the Cloughjordan circuit, and he mentions that the work is still increasing there also."

For about eight years one or more of the representatives from England were in the habit of coming to Ireland a few weeks previous to the meeting of Conference, and visiting the principal towns to preach and assist at other meetings, and thus rendered valuable service to the cause. This year, however, a change took place, by the appointment of the Revs. Thomas Martin and Robert Newstead to visit the south, in spring, as a deputation from the General Missionary Committee, and it was attended with good effects, in leading to the formation of associations, and exciting a deeper interest in the cause of missions. The Irish Conference therefore subsequently requested that a similar deputation should be appointed for the following year. Such was the origin of the annual Missionary Deputation from England, the visits of which have proved replete with interest and the means of much and lasting advantage.

On June 22nd, at Newcastle, Down, a new chapel was opened for Divine worship, by the Rev. Charles Mayne. The congregation was large, and a sacred unction accompanied the preaching of the word. The collection amounted to £10. It is stated that a lively interest in this erection was manifested in the village and its vicinity, by persons of all denominations, and that the great

number who resorted there for sea-bathing afforded an encouraging prospect of extensive usefulness.

The revival on the Maguiresbridge circuit, in connection with the labours of the Primitive Wesleyan preachers, continued to deepen and extend in its gracious influence. Amongst the new openings secured, one was at Edenaveagh, where a congregation of more than three hundred persons assembled in a school-house, at the first service. Soon the power of God descended, a loud and general cry for mercy was heard, the preacher had to abruptly end his discourse, and a prayer-meeting was held. At this service seventeen persons were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour, and about one hundred were convinced of sin. On the following Sabbath a class of thirty members was formed, and thus an effectual door was opened in a district of country that had been in great spiritual destitution. At the March quarterly meetings about sixty souls were brought into the liberty of the children of God, and a similar number at those held in June. During the year nearly five hundred members were added to the Society on this circuit.

Mr. William Browne of the Charlemont circuit says that before the September quarterly meetings there were the droppings of a shower; but at the meeting in Charlemont there was a blessed outpouring of the Spirit, so that several were enabled to rejoice in a sin-pardoning God. From that time until Christmas the work moved on steadily, there being some awakened and converted. At the December meeting the Spirit of God was again poured out, and the good work spread through the surrounding country, until about seventy were led to the Saviour. There were six new classes, including seventy-two additional members, and many of the old classes were much enlarged.*

Mr. Dawson D. Heather was now on the Boyle and Roscommon mission, and obtained access to the houses of many of the higher classes, with whom he was very acceptable as a preacher, and to whom he proclaimed the Gospel "in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." On February 24th he writes that the mission never before stood so high as then in regard to its moral and religious state. At Boyle the cause began to raise its head; at Castlereagh considerable interest and inquiry were excited

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1827, pp. 242-44.

amongst both Romanists and Protestants concerning the reading of the Bible; at Roscommon there was a large and respectable congregation, including some of nearly every Protestant family in the town and neighbourhood; at Ballymurray the use of the Friends' meeting-house was placed at the service of the Society; at Strokestown there was a large class and congregation; and an opening had been obtained in the town of Leitrim. Twenty-five years subsequently, a pious police officer met in this district of country a Roman Catholic woman, who displayed a remarkable acquaintance with the Word of God, expressed her confidence in Christ as her Saviour, and was in the habit, on returning from mass, each Sunday, to preach Jesus to the people. It appeared that this was the result of a conversation Mr. Heather had with her, along the road, and his giving to her a copy of the sacred Scriptures.*

From the Oldcastle circuit Mr. Noble Wiley writes, "Our cause is increasing in this country very much. Three new classes have been formed since Conference. I hope to establish one or two more, and the old ones have improved both in grace and numbers." The Reformation movement proved very helpful to the Society, and the Society to it. There were on this circuit about twenty of the converts from Popery who met in class, and about one hundred who were hearers. In the beginning of the year there had been considerable opposition at Castlepollard, from a quarter where it was least expected; but the Reformation movement had converted foes into friends, so the parish school-house was placed at the service of the Society, and a large congregation assembled in it.†

Early in summer the Rev. Adam Averell, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Martin Keene, made a tour through the south, and their visits, especially to Limerick and Cork, were much owned of God. Large congregations attended the preaching of the word, which was accompanied with Divine power. The service, however, which excited most interest was a missionary meeting held in the French Church street chapel. It was the first assembly of this kind in connection with the Primitive Wesleyan Society in Cork. The Mayor presided, and it proved

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1862, pp. 175-78.

† *Ibid*, 1827, pp. 86, 87.

the commencement of a long series of similar services, which were the means of much good.

On June 27th the Primitive Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin, as usual. Joseph Payne of Athlone, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months; two candidates were admitted on trial, one of whom was William Lendrum of Clones; and one death was reported, that of Robert Smith, whose end was one of peace and Christian triumph. The increase in the membership was four hundred and fifty-five. The public meetings were well attended, and at the lovefeast especially a gracious influence rested on those present; but the peculiar feature of these meetings was the deep interest manifested in the missionary cause. No less than nine clergymen of the Established Church were on the platform at the public meeting, the Lord Mayor took the chair, and the proceedings were such as could not fail to make an impression not only favourable to the cause, but to the Society with which it was connected.

The Wesleyan Conference, which in many respects was a memorable one, met in Belfast, for the first time, on July 2nd. About one hundred ministers assembled, and were hospitably entertained by families connected with the Methodist societies and congregations in the town, and by members of other Evangelical churches. The President, the Rev. Richard Watson, was accompanied by the Revs. Jabez Bunting, John Mason, and Thomas Roberts, A.M. William Hamilton, who had been for seven years in connection with the Primitive Wesleyan Conference, was received as having travelled twelve months; and Daniel Macafee and John P. Hetherington, who also had been Primitive Wesleyan preachers, were, with Robert H. Lindsay, admitted on trial. Mr. Hetherington, however, became a member of the British Conference. Two ministers had died during the year—Matthew Stewart, who "finished his course happy in God," and Daniel M'Mullen, who had quietly fallen asleep, and awoke in heaven. On some circuits, it appeared, the Lord had poured out His Spirit in awakening, converting, and sanctifying power; but on others there had been decreases in the numbers, owing to lukewarmness and to emigration. Although upwards of four hundred members had gone to England

or America, there was an increase of nearly one hundred, and the societies in general had become "more united and settled in the love of Christ." We now observe, for the first time, a reference to the use of schedules, in order to ensure more correct numerical returns, each circuit and mission being required to fill up a quarterly return of the number of members, deaths, removals, etc., for examination at the several district meetings. It is also worthy of note that Mr. Thomas A. Shillington attended the meeting of the Chapel Fund Committee, as the representative of the Newry district, and was appointed one of the treasurers of the Fund, thus entering upon a connection with that department in which he subsequently rendered protracted and valuable aid.

The public religious services of the Conference excited great interest, and were attended by crowds of serious and attentive hearers, many of whom had come from the neighbouring towns to be present. The session of the third Presbyterian church kindly placed their large and beautiful meeting-house in Rosemary street, for two Sunday afternoons, at the disposal of the Methodist preachers, and the pulpit was filled by Messrs. Watson and Bunting. The chief interest, however, was centred in the service for the reception of the young men into full connexion, held in Donegal square chapel. "Never," says Mr. Tackaberry, "did I see a house of worship so packed before. Socinians, Arians, Romanists, Episcopalians, and Wesleyans were eye and ear witnesses. The President opened the service with the 446th hymn. Messrs. Wood and Mayne prayed delightfully indeed, and an appropriate and affecting address, on the nature and importance of the Christian ministry, was delivered by the President." Patrick Ffrench, who had spent nine years in the West Indies, Fossey Tackaberry, Henry Price, and James B. Gillman, who had been placed in the first seat of the front gallery, then in succession gave an account of their conversion to God and call to the ministry. The attention of the vast audience became more fixed and intense than ever, deep feeling was evinced, and many devout breathings ascended to heaven. The President proceeded to ask the usual questions, and when they were answered Mr. Roberts moved, Mr. Wood seconded, and Mr. Bunting supported a resolution to the effect

"that these brethren be received into full connexion with the Methodist Conference," and the whole body of ministers expressed their approval by standing up. Another hymn having been sung, the service concluded with prayer, offered by Messrs. Mason and Bunting. "But oh," says Mr. Tackaberry, "such a prayer as that of Mr. Bunting's! I never heard its like before—an overwhelming torrent of eloquence, pure, simple, sublime, devotional, Evangelical, laying hold on Christ, and bringing the blessing down." A prayer that, which still lingers, after the lapse of sixty years, in the memories of those now living who were privileged to hear it.

The Christian liberality of the Presbyterians was subsequently appropriately recognized, for at a leaders' meeting held in Belfast, on September 13th, it having been stated that the Rev. Dr. Hanna, Presbyterian minister, had applied for the use of the Ballymacarret chapel, either gratuitously or at a fixed rent, at such hours each Sabbath as would not interfere with the Methodist services, it was agreed to grant the request for three months, free of cost, and at the end of that period, if the building should be required any longer, to make a charge of ten pounds per annum. By this friendly and catholic act the Presbyterians were enabled to obtain a footing in that part of Belfast, and eventually to establish a permanent church.

During the second visit of the eccentric Lorenzo Dow to Larne, one of his hearers was a young woman, Miss Margaret Thompson, who was thus led to religious decision, and at once joined the Society. About the same time a young man, James Boyd, also became a Methodist, and the two were subsequently united in marriage, and became pillars of Methodism in the neighbourhood. Mr. Boyd was a most acceptable local preacher, and greatly respected for his Christian consistency. He took a deep interest in Connexional affairs, and gave valuable aid in more than one important crisis of the Society. His house was the home of the preachers. The Sunday-school commenced by Mr. Boyd, at the suggestion of his excellent partner, was the first opened in the town, and it was very large and successful. Mrs. Boyd was a noble woman, whose liberality to the poor and hospitality seemed almost unbounded, and who at length fell a martyr to her Christian devotion.

In the town a small chapel had been erected about the year

1806, but its situation was bad, the ceiling low, and the accommodation insufficient for the Society. A better site having been obtained, and the consent of Conference received, it was resolved to erect a new building. The foundation-stone was laid on February 1st, 1827; and the house was opened on July 15th, by the Rev. James B. Gillman, who preached two eloquent and powerful sermons. The collections amounted to £34. Mr. and Mrs. Boyd were the chief agents in supplying the means for the accomplishment of this important undertaking, as they not only subscribed £100, but advanced all the additional money required. No sooner was the building opened than a considerable increase took place in the congregation, several joined the Society, and some souls were won for Christ.

At Cork also the old chapel on Hammond's Marsh, having been used for upwards of seventy years, and having fallen into a dilapidated state, was taken down, and a new chapel erected, with a school-house and two ministers' residences. This was accomplished during the winter and spring by the unwearied labours of the Rev. William Stewart and the generous aid of the members and friends of the Cork Society, with the consent of Conference, and the house was opened on July 18th.

In Armagh the Society sustained a serious loss in the sudden death of Mr. John Noble, who for half a century had discharged the duties of a local preacher and class-leader with unwavering fidelity and zeal. The Rev. John Armstrong says of him, "Taking him all and all, I have hardly known his equal." And Dr. Lynn's record is, "He was a man of strong intellect, of uncompromising honesty and firmness, full of faith, mighty in the Scriptures, and well known for his attachment to Methodism, which owed much of its success, under God, to his Christian consistency and unwearied labours. His memory is still gratefully cherished by those who knew him in the evening of life, when though his bodily powers were weak, his mind was vigorous and his ardour undiminished."

The Rev. John Armstrong was appointed as a missionary to Cavan, and does not give a favourable account of the state in which he found the field to which he had been sent. "At Belturbet," he says, "there was a middling congregation, and through want of faithfulness in Christian professors, the cause did not

prosper." "At Killashandra there was a serious congregation, but much need of a revival, the leaders and people being cold and dead." "At Ballyjamesduff the work was not prosperous." Soon, however, a pleasing change for the better took place, and we read, "At Cootehill quarterly meeting there was much of the presence and power of God." "At Clones the congregation was large, the people spoke with life and to the point, and at the conclusion we had a penitent meeting, during which a number found liberty, through the blood of the Lamb." "At Corlisbrattan the house was filled to the door." "At Killashandra there was a great congregation." "At Cavan Mr. Ouseley and I took the street, a vast multitude was present then, and at night in the chapel." "At Ballyjamesduff we had an excellent meeting." "At Ballyhaise there was the largest congregation on the mission, and I formed a new class there, for we had none." "I have not known Killashandra in a better state for the last twelve years." "Preached at Drumkilroosk, to about one hundred and forty persons, and formed a class of seventeen members." "The country is ripe for the Gospel."

The Rev. John Saul, who was appointed to Magherafelt mission, having been requested by a relative of Dr. Clarke to visit Eden, in that neighbourhood, did so; the Lord blessed his labours, and soon a flourishing class was formed. Amongst the members was Mr. David York, who opened his house for the entertainment of the servants of God, and was spared to see several of his children converted to God through the instrumentality of Methodism, while one became a devoted leader, and four passed in triumph to the home above.

The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry was stationed in Dublin, and the work greatly prospered through the Divine blessing on his labours and the labours of those associated with him. The attendance at the public and more select means of grace greatly increased, and the services proved means of abundant spiritual blessing, until at length he could say there was a movement in the city; and although there was no noise, the Lord was working in saving and sanctifying power. Whitefriar street chapel was "full outside the door," and at Gravel walk house Mr. Tackaberry had to stop preaching, in order to pray with persons in distress. The work continued, and bore all the marks of a genuine revival. "We had not," he says, "such hope of prosperity in Dublin, since I knew it, as at present."

And no wonder, when he adds, "Everywhere I turn I find the spirit of prayer and expectation on the increase. And we have not only hopes, but drops before the shower. Several have been saved at the meetings lately. To-day, at the eleven o'clock prayer-meeting, while Mr. Ferguson prayed, there was a cry for mercy. Our old preachers, Messrs. Smith, Ferguson, and Murphy, are gloriously alive. It is truly delightful and encouraging to see these venerable fathers, so zealous, so earnest, and so happy in God." Mr. Tackaberry's account of the Christmas and watch-night services shows that the spirit of prayer did continue, and that heavenly influences were still vouchsafed. "On Christmas Day Mr. Smith preached to a very crowded audience. There was deep attention and a very good feeling. I was appointed to preach at the watch-night meeting, which I did, with fear and trembling, to the largest congregation I ever addressed."

In August Mr. Feckman was in the county of Limerick, labouring with characteristic zeal and success. At Kilfinnane he preached at first to a congregation of only twenty, and saw no appearance of good amongst the people; but subsequently he had a large audience, and "a weeping time with some, while others were refreshed and melted down in the mould of love Divine." At a third service "the Spirit was poured out; some were cut to the heart, one received pardon, and four joined the Society." At Glenosheen, which had had no Wesleyan service for nearly forty years, there was a large congregation and appearance of good; and at Ballyorgan, another deserted place, there were at the service about sixty persons, who appeared "as ignorant of God and salvation as any of the sons of Ham," but afterwards the Lord melted many of their hearts.

The Rev. Thomas T. N. Hull was appointed to Wexford, where the young preachers then slept in the house of Captain Atkin, and boarded, during the town fortnight, with friends in the locality. The chapel, which externally looked more like a barn than a place of worship, and was accessible by stone steps, was, however, well attended by a congregation that included some very excellent families, such as the Meyers, Rowes, and Atkins, that have swelled the ranks of either the itinerants or their wives.* Had there been

* The Revs. James Tobias and William Butler, D.D., were married to daughters of Mr. Moses Rowe, and the Rev. W. B. Le Bert to a daughter of Captain Atkin.

a more attractive place of worship in the town, it is probable the cause would have extended more rapidly. There was a combination of circumstances, at the time, highly favourable; while the provision for the permanent adherence of those connected with the Society was rather repellent than otherwise. The country portions of the circuit included New Ross, Inistioge, Enniscorthy, and numerous intervening places. At New Ross there was a prosperous cause, the very modest little chapel being generally crowded on Sunday evenings, with an audience that included the M'Cormicks, Eagers, Laurences, and Morans. Miss Moran, with her father, a custom-house officer, had removed from Cork to Newry, and thence again to New Ross, in each of which she was made eminently useful, especially to young females. She was very popular, and frequently, by request, was called on to lead in prayer at the close of the sermon. While on this circuit, Mr. Hull made his first attempt at open-air preaching, and that under stormy auspices. It was at a place called Taghmon, where, at the close of the Church service, as he stood at the gate, sang a hymn, and engaged in prayer, a few persons assembled. But when he announced his text, Acts xxvi. 17, 18, in an almost incredibly short time an immense crowd of Romanists collected, and with rotten eggs, dead cats, and squibs, scattered the more timid hearers, until a friendly police sergeant recommended the preacher to give up, or the consequences would be serious, as some of the mob had got into an adjoining tower, from which they were about to throw stones. An old Quaker took Mr. Hull up on his car, drove him to a house, where he preached that evening to a large audience, and entertained him for the night. Next morning this venerable Friend took the youthful preacher aside, and with streaming eyes, said, "I have been a great sinner. What must I do to be saved?" Suitable counsel was given, but with what permanent results the counsellor had no opportunity of ascertaining.

At this period a young man named William Cooke, who had just been received on trial, and subsequently became very distinguished, was appointed by the New Connexion Conference to Belfast. In his first report to the superintendent of the Irish missions he says that the chapel in Belfast was well attended by a respectable and attentive audience; a few were added to the Society, which manifested growth in grace; and in the Sunday-

school, which had been recently established, upwards of a hundred and forty children received instruction. In Milltown and Newtownbreda the congregations were large, and the people apparently desirous to be acquainted with the things which belonged to their peace; in Bangor the chapel was well filled; and at Ballywatticock, where he had formed a class of fourteen persons, there was a prospect of much good. Another of the missionaries, the Rev. John Lyons, writes from Downpatrick, giving an account of several encouraging openings he had obtained, including Lismore, Ballyhornan, and Ardglass, where the audiences were exceedingly large, and in some instances included many Romanists.

On the Primitive Wesleyan mission at Lisburn, Mr. Edward Sullivan found very few places prepared to receive him, and therefore for some time laboured under considerable disadvantage. However, he determined, if possible, to obtain some new openings, and therefore arranged with Messrs. William Browne and William Pattyson to meet in Banbridge on the market day. Mr. Pattyson preached in the street to a large audience, and then announced for Mr. Sullivan in the market-house that night. About one hundred assembled, including twenty Romanists, and from that time services were regularly held and largely attended in the town. The missionary also visited and preached in Dromore, Hillsborough, and Ballynahinch. During one of the services in the last-mentioned town a mob surrounded the house, made a great noise, and threw stones at the windows; but some police who were present went out and put an end to their riotous proceedings.* Before the close of the year, promising classes were formed at Banbridge, Ballynahinch, Hillsborough, and other places, including a membership of more than one hundred persons.

On the Cookstown mission it appeared that one-half of those to whom the missionary, Mr. Thomas Payne, preached were Roman Catholics, who listened with deep attention, and expressed their gratitude in warm terms. The chapel in Cookstown was attended by a large and respectable congregation, while three new preaching-places were secured. In one of these the principles of Methodism had been unknown, but now they were openly proclaimed, and the greatest enemies of the cause became its warmest friends

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1827, p. 372.

in another place the missionary preached in a large school-house, to a congregation of about two hundred and fifty persons; and in the third opening a class of fourteen members was formed.*

Concerning the Newtownstewart circuit, Mr. Edward Addy reports that on his first round God manifested His presence in such power as excited hopes of richer blessings, and these expectations were graciously realized. At the Sixmilecross September quarterly meeting five souls were converted and two backsliders restored; and at Fintona ten persons were enabled to rejoice in the Lord their Saviour, and a work commenced that even enemies of the truth acknowledged to be of God. Some promising young men set out for the kingdom of heaven, and became as zealous for Christ as they had been for Satan. Mr. James Robinson was very active as a local preacher, holding field-meetings and preaching with success through all the surrounding country. Chiefly through his influence, a preaching-house was erected in Fintona, and soon afterwards, to the great loss of the locality, he emigrated to Australia. The revival which commenced thus spread, and large numbers were converted, of whom some remain to this day faithful servants of their blessed Master. One of the converts was William Moore, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, and whose brother John, converted a year or two previously, was a very able and devoted leader, local preacher, and Sunday-school superintendent.† Similar triumphs were won for Christ at Newtownstewart, Strabane, where a new chapel was erected, and Aghnahoo; while at Curraghamulkin there was a memorable work. Here a pious couple, with a numerous family, had lived and entertained the preachers for many years. When the good old woman was dying she expressed great confidence that God would give her all her children, and that they would follow her to heaven. Alas! they did not for some time attend to the earnest admonitions of their devoted mother; but her prayers on their behalf were registered on high, the servants of God sought out the wanderers, and one by one they were all led to the Saviour, and several of their children, making nearly thirty descendants who adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour.‡

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* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1828, p. 183.

† *Ibid*, 1862, pp. 207-10. ‡ *Ibid*, 1827, pp. 373-74.

CHAPTER IX.

1828.

A Society to promote the principles of the Reformation having been formed in Cork, and it having been proposed that this organization should unite with the Society in London having the same object in view, a meeting was held for that purpose, on January 10th, 1828, in the Wesleyan chapel, Patrick street. During the course of this meeting a Mr. J. P. Hennessy interrupted the proceedings, demanded a hearing, and on that being granted, proceeded to make a series of objections to the statement that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice. This led to a public discussion, which was continued on the following day, when the Rev. Thomas Waugh took a leading and most important part, not only defending the principles of the Reformation from the unfounded charges made with regard to them, but also proving that the teaching of the Church of Rome is contrary to the Word of God; and concluded his address in the following stirring words: "The way to destroy error is to pour a flood of light upon it. When men become ashamed of any article of belief they are not far from denying it. Thus let us drag into the light of revelation whatever is opposed to the simplicity and purity of the religion of Christ. Former advocates will shortly shrink from an avowal of relationship, and the work of repudiation, with the Divine blessing, will proceed. We war not with ecclesiastical dignities, modes of church government, or proper influences exerted by the clergy over their people. We are not anxious for mere change of name, nor wish to have the Church of Rome swallowed up in other churches, if we may but be the honoured instruments of forcing her to reform herself. Let her cast from her all that is opposed to God's Holy Word—our end will be accomplished, and we shall hail with gladness and gratitude the issue."

At a Reformation meeting in Omagh also there was a discussion on the Romish controversy. The court-house was crowded. Three priests set themselves forward as the champions of Rome, and on the Protestant side there were two Episcopal clergymen, a lay gentleman, and Gideon Ouseley. The Methodist missionary was the first to speak in reply to one of the priests, and he did so with such clear and convincing logic that the priest who followed seemed electrified, did not know what to say, and stammered out something altogether foreign to the subject. This appears to have been the only occasion on which Ouseley shared with others the responsibility of a public debate; and Mr. Reilly gives a good reason for it. The priests refused to meet him; his "Old Christianity" had taken more people from them than any book published within the memory of man, and his oral feats were to them a familiar source of anxiety. Although the platform was not open to this master of controversy, the press was, and he availed himself of it freely, by writing repeatedly and at length to the public papers.

Many instances might be recorded of the consistent lives and triumphant deaths of the converts from Romanism. Suffice it to refer to one, Denis O'Mullen, of Bellaghy. In 1790, when about thirty years of age, he was taught to read by a member of the Society, began to study the Bible, and having heard the Gospel preached by one of the Methodist itinerants, sought and obtained admission to a lovefeast at Castledawson. At that meeting he was deeply convinced of sin, and three months afterwards obtained a clear evidence of pardoning mercy through faith in the blood of the Lamb. So fully was he satisfied of the errors of Popery that from the time he was awakened to a sense of his sinfulness he never attended mass, except once, and that was in order to induce his aged father to hear a Methodist preacher, which led to the old man's conversion, so that with his last breath he expressed his enlightened and Gospel hope, saying joyfully, "Yonder is Christ; I go to meet Him." Denis suffered much persecution from his relatives and the priests, yet, by the grace of God, stood firm. Such was his growth in grace that two years after he joined the Society he was appointed a leader, which office he sustained with fidelity and success for thirty-six years. By diligence and economy he saved from his earnings a sum sufficient to purchase

a copy of Coke's Commentary, and bequeathed to each of his six sons one volume of this treasure. He became an able advocate of the doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures, and fearlessly stood forward frequently in their defence. During his last illness he testified clearly to the truth, and rejoiced in the confidence that his anchor was cast "within the veil."

The Bandon circuit sustained a serious loss at the commencement of this year, by the death of one of its ministers, John Wilson, jun., a young man of great promise. The solemnity of his appearance and ministry, his devotion to God and His work, and his careful preparation for it are remembered to the present day. It is said that while preaching "he appeared like one standing on the margin of the invisible world, in holy converse with God." On December 28th he preached for the last time, in Dunmanway, from "The Lord is my portion," and although in the first stage of his final illness, seemed to be unusually happy. At Ballyneen, in the house of Francis Daunt, he became so ill as to be unable to proceed on his journey, and notwithstanding the efforts of the physicians, the disease continued to increase. On asking for a New Testament, and it being handed to him, he pressed it to his breast, saying, "It is enough; it is enough; the living and true witness. Thy promises delight my soul. My hope is full—oh, glorious hope of immortality!" And on another occasion he exclaimed, "I see the promised inheritance, and shall soon be there." In this spirit of holy triumph he passed home on January 15th; and on the 18th his remains were interred in the ground, in front of the new chapel, Bandon, thousands, it is said, being present to show their respect for his memory.

Mr. William Foote of the Rosscarbery mission says that the Lord made bare His arm there, in the salvation of many souls. At Kilronane there was a very gracious awakening, which commenced with the conversion of a man who had been a proverb for wickedness, and the leader of a notorious and cruel fighting faction. On his conversion he became as zealous for Christ as he had been for the devil, so that in a short time a class was formed of sixty members, including at least two who had been Roman Catholics. The good work soon extended to other parts of the mission, in such a way as surpassed the highest expectations of the missionary, many being led to lay down the weapons of their rebellion and

enrol themselves under the banner of the Cross. At Rosscarbery the congregations were large and earnest, and at Millstreet there was a glorious manifestation of the power and mercy of God.

At the annual missionary meeting in City road chapel, London, the first resolution was moved by the Earl of Mountcashel, who not only paid a high tribute to the zeal, endurance, and success of the Methodist missionaries in Ireland, but referred to one or two striking instances of a retributive Providence in regard to those who opposed them, for the accuracy of which he himself could vouch. Thus one of these devoted evangelists having arrived at a village on a Sunday, and taken his stand near the Roman Catholic chapel, preached to a great multitude of people. The priest feeling much annoyed at this, placed himself at the head of a crowd, not far from the preacher, and at a certain point in the discourse raised his arm as a signal to his followers, who set up a loud shout, to drown the voice of the speaker. This, however, did not discourage the servant of God, who proceeded to the end of his sermon. A few days afterwards, as the priest passed the place, he raised his arm, said, "That is the spot where the cursed heretic preached to the people," and immediately he was seized with paralysis, staggered backwards, and was taken home in a state of insensibility.

At Newtownards, Robert Wallace, then a young man of sixteen, was brought into connection with Methodism. Born and bred a Presbyterian, the first Methodist minister he heard preach was the Rev. James Patterson; and the impression made on the mind of the youth was that what he had heard was in accordance with God's Word. He was aroused to a deep sense of his guilt and danger, sought the Lord earnestly, and at length, through the Divine blessing on a sermon preached by the Rev. Thomas T. N. Hull, from Isaiah liii. 5, was enabled to believe with a heart unto righteousness. His sense of God's pardoning love was clear and abiding; and thenceforward his supreme aim was to glorify God and save sinners from the error of their ways. His studies were prosecuted under more than ordinary difficulties; but naturally endowed with an indomitable will, difficulties were regarded by him only as things to be overcome, and thus he was prepared for a position of commanding influence and extensive usefulness.

From the Donegal mission the Rev. Edward Cobain writes that the labours of himself and his colleague, the Rev. John Feely, had been crowned with success, both as it regards numbers and the conversion of sinners. A new chapel in Dunkineely, commenced by the Rev. Charles M'Cord, was finished. The opening excited considerable interest, and subsequently it was well filled, at the ordinary services, with serious and attentive hearers. Amongst those in this town soon afterwards brought into connection with Methodism and converted to God, was George Vance, who has since then occupied such a high position in the esteem and affection of his brethren. His earliest powerful impression, in favour of fully deciding for Christ, was on a lovefeast day, in June, through a sermon preached by Mr. Cobain, when the penitent youth was urged by his elder brother and other leaders to remain for the after-meeting, but declined, as he was not a member of the Society. On the following evening, however, at a service conducted in a neighbouring farm-house, he obtained peace in believing, and then commenced an eminently successful career of quiet, steady, and faithful work for Christ.

It had long been in contemplation to erect a Primitive Wesleyan chapel in Cavan; but this project was retarded for want of a suitable site. Lord Farnham was friendly to the cause, subscribed to the funds, and was wishful to accommodate the Society with ground, but had not for some time an eligible place at his disposal. At length a new street was opened in a central part of the town, and this afforded the long-wished-for accommodation, which was at once granted. Here what was then considered a handsome structure was erected, under the superintendence, and to a great extent by the liberality, of Messrs. Smith and Fitzgerald, the leading members of the Society in Cavan; and the opening service was conducted by the Rev. Adam Averell.

The extensive religious awakening of the previous two years on the Maguiresbridge circuit continued during the whole of this year. The labours of a third preacher were secured, and a regular plan was formed; but soon the work became too much even for the three brethren engaged in it. The converts sprang up "as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses;" and all the services were attended with the convincing, converting, and sanctifying power of God. At length, one after another, the health

of each of the preachers gave way, until the three were laid aside. But two young men were secured as a supply for them, and they, aided by the leaders, carried on the good work. At a field-meeting held in June, on the commons of Fivemiletown, it was estimated that three thousand persons were present, while the Rev. Adam Averell preached with power on the nature and necessity of perfect love. Three years previously there were on this circuit eighty-eight leaders, and one thousand four hundred and forty members of Society; now there were one hundred and forty-three leaders, and two thousand four hundred and sixteen members; being an increase of fifty-five leaders, and nine hundred and seventy-six members.*

On the Tanderagee circuit, where Messrs. William Pattyson and James G. Brown were appointed, the work greatly prospered. During the two years now about to end it was estimated that at least four hundred souls had been won for Christ. The clergy of the Established Church were amongst the warmest supporters of the Society, and arrangements were made for the erection of new chapels at Maghon and Scotchstreet.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference was opened on June 25th. Robert Magowan of the Armagh circuit, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months, and eight candidates were admitted on trial. These included Samuel M'Clung of Fintona, James Robinson of Ballykeel, Tyrone, Robert Parsons of the Enniskillen circuit, and Robert Wilson of Derryscollop. Two deaths were reported, those of John Hurst and William Irons, who at the close of life triumphed over the last enemy. The increase in the membership amounted to one hundred and sixty-six. For the first time we notice a reference to a public reception into full connexion of the probationers who had completed their term of trial. "The Divine presence," it is said, "was eminently felt at this meeting and at the Conference lovefeast, when every serious worshipper was refreshed and comforted." The missionary meeting was also interesting and successful.

The Wesleyan Conference commenced its sittings in Dublin on July 1st, under the presidency of the Rev. John Stephens, who was accompanied by the Rev. John James. The Rev. Samuel

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1828, pp. 341-43.

Wood was elected secretary. Robert Jessop of Mountrath, and Henry Lucy of Doogary, near Brookeborough, having been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months; and there were admitted on trial four other brethren, including Thomas Meredith, John Williams of Carrickfergus, and William Lupton, a native of Yorkshire, who had come to Ireland as a Primitive Methodist preacher. Two ministers had died during the year—John Wilson, jun., to whom reference has been made, and John Malcomson, who preached for the last time only two days before his death, and finished his course rejoicing in God. Although the country had been painfully agitated by political and religious discussions, and hundreds of members had been lost through emigration, the Societies were reported as being "in a state of gradual advancement and general prosperity," showing an increase of one hundred and fifty-seven, while the state of the cause in Cork, Bandon, Skibbereen, Belfast, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, and a few other places was specially gratifying.

The most important act of the Conference was the inauguration of a noble and successful movement for the removal of the huge debt of more than eight thousand pounds that had for years hampered and crushed the Connexion. The preachers had to endure a series of painful and embarrassing privations, and during the eleven years which elapsed from 1817 to 1828 voluntarily submitted to be taxed to the amount of £7,712 15*s.* 6*d.*, which, added to their subscriptions in 1805, 1811, and 1813, made a total of more than £9,000 contributed towards the debt. Various expedients had been employed to remove this great fiscal burden, but notwithstanding the self-denial exercised, all had failed, and nothing was paid but the interest. It was therefore now resolved that a great effort should be made to remove this debt, by each preacher subscribing at least ten pounds, and by an earnest appeal to the people. Every man seemed rejoiced at the prospect of deliverance, and those who had private means gave sums varying from fifteen to one hundred pounds. Thus within an hour about £1,800 was subscribed. The generous feeling which animated the preachers moved the people also, so that they responded to the appeal made to them by contributing £5,155, the largest contributors being Mr. Henry Cornwall, £500; Mr. R. Napper, Dublin, Mr. T. Pierce, Wicklow, Mr. William M'Connell of

Belfast, and the Rev. William Stewart, £100 each. When this was announced at the British Conference it was at once resolved that the balance necessary to pay off the whole debt should be raised by the English preachers and their friends. Thus, with the Divine blessing, this vast undertaking was carried to a successful and joyful termination.

The Rev. George Burrows was appointed as junior preacher to Mountrath, and in his Journal gives an interesting view of the state of the circuit. It included Abbeyleix, Maryborough, Durrow, Mountmellick, Stradbally, Ballyhuppahane, Coolbally, Oldtown, and Gurteen, in each of which there was a chapel and a good congregation. Amongst the leading families, reference is made to the familiar names of Kelly, Vanston, Odlum, Foster, and Medcalf. A young man, named John Hatch Power, a native of Dublin, came to reside at Abbeyleix, with his grandfather, and thus was brought into connection with Methodism, led to hear the Gospel preached in saving power, and drawn in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross. Hence when it was decided he should enter the medical profession, and therefore return to the metropolis, he carried with him the surest safeguards that ever sheltered a friendless youth or cheered a struggling student, in a determined purpose, an approving conscience, and a heart at peace with God. Dr. Power subsequently settled in Dublin, and became one of the first surgeons in Ireland, but ever remained faithful to Christ and to Methodism, exercising a widespread and powerful influence for good.

A number of chapels were erected through the zeal and enterprise of the Rev. Alexander Mackey; and amongst the rest, one at Hyde Park. This village has given to Methodism, at home or abroad, a number of ministers, as well as laymen, who have rendered good service to the cause. At what time the Society obtained access to this neighbourhood is not quite clear; but it appears to have been about the year 1817; and amongst the Methodists of this period were Jamison Sheppard, the first leader, Alexander Murdock, David Nesbitt, James Kane, and John M'Ilwaine. The services were held in private houses, then in a school-house at Molusk, and that in time having proved inadequate to meet the requirements of the Society, Mr. Mackey set about the erection of a chapel, aided by the above, and on the

completion of the building the opening service was conducted by the Rev. James B. Gillman, who preached a very able sermon from Deuteronomy vi. 4. In the evening there was a prayer-meeting, at which Matthew Thoburn,* David Nesbitt, Alexander Murdock, and others took part, and several persons found mercy. A gracious religious awakening thus commenced, during which many were converted, and amongst others, James Murdock, who subsequently entered the itinerancy and did a good work for the cause.

A second chapel, erected at the same time and through the efforts of the same minister, was at Ballyclare. This building was unnecessarily large, and owing to the nature of the site and other difficulties, involved a vast expense, which the circuit was ill able to bear. The opening services were conducted by the Revs. Daniel Macafee and James B. Gillman. The crowd that attended was very great, and the sermons were spoken of for many a day. Mr. Macafee's discourse, on Divine Worship, was published, and had a large circulation. Mr. William M'Connell held a mortgage on this property for £800, but generously cancelled it on condition that his name should be engraved on a plate in a certain pew, which was to be reserved for the preacher's family. A third chapel, built at this period and on this circuit, was at Island Magee, but details are not now available, except that reference is made to the consequent and cheering tokens of good in connection with the congregation.

A neat chapel was also erected at Moira, in collecting the needed funds for which Miss Lutton rendered valuable aid. A brief glimpse is given of a visit paid by this devoted Christian lady to Omagh and Aughnacloy. Those who were present at the services conducted by her reported the sweet melodiousness of her voice, both in singing and speaking, the thrilling and impressive earnestness of her manner, and the deep devoutness of her spirit. Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, the intellectual and the wealthy as well as those in humble stations, flocked to hear her, at first perhaps from curiosity, but afterwards from love and reverence.

The eldest daughter of Mr. Henry Sinclair † having married

* Father of the Rev. Dr. Thoburn.

† *Vide* ii., p. 270.

Mr. John C. Thompson of Ardmore, the ministers were invited to their house, which thus, for nearly sixty years, has proved a centre of light and blessing in this part of the county of Antrim. Mrs. Thompson was a woman of singular excellence; with a character moulded and beautified by Divine grace, she lived a happy, loving, and blameless life for fifty years, and then died in the faith and hope of the Gospel.

At Fermoy, where a chapel had been erected about six years previously, an unprovoked attack was made on the building, doing it serious injury. The Rev. Thomas Waugh having called the attention of Lord Mountcashel to this disgraceful outrage, his lordship replied, expressing his regret that the local magistrates took so little interest in it, promising to assist the Society in every way in his power, and fearing that it was only the prelude to more serious troubles, as political and religious animosity ran so high in that neighbourhood.*

During the winter of 1828-29, through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Rev. Robert Jessop, a very extensive and gracious religious awakening took place in Bandon and throughout the circuit, the results of which were of the most cheering and permanent character. Amongst those converted were the following young men, who subsequently entered the itinerancy: John Boyle Bennett,† William John Norwood, and John Henry Atkins.‡ Others, such as Thomas Elmes, Thomas Robinson,§ and James Long, were received into the ministry of the Established Church, while not a few, including Thomas Clear, John Scott, and Thomas Bennett,‖ long occupied prominent and useful positions in the Society, and their children and children's children have risen up to call them blessed. To those led to the Saviour at this period must be added the names of at least two sisters—Alice Sullivan, subsequently Mrs. John Harris, who long lived faithfully and earnestly to witness and work for Christ, and Elizabeth Hamilton, afterwards wife of Mr. Thomas Bryan of Dunmanway.

The reports from the stations of the Primitive Wesleyan missionaries were of a cheering nature. In the county of Wick-

* Unpublished letter to the Rev. T. Waugh.

† Son of Mr. John Bennett of Clonakilty. *Vide* ii., 362.

‡ A grandson of Mrs. Elizabeth Atkins. *Vide* i., 370.

§ Nephew of Sylvanus Robinson. *Vide* i., 408.

‖ Now of Shannon Vale—a grand-nephew of Thomas Bennett. *Vide* i., 274.

low, at Coolafancy, Askakeagh, and Mullans, Mr. John Ramsey having found the congregations small and the people in general cold and indifferent as to religion, resolved to try and secure some new openings. The first place thus obtained was Cunniamstown, where a few persons were collected in a small room; but the number so increased as to fill the largest apartment available. At Preban and Arklow commodious school-houses were placed at the disposal of the missionary, by the rectors, and regular services thus established in each. Access was also gained to Carnew, Rathdrum, and Newtownmountkennedy. But the greatest encouragement was given at Baltinglass, where in a short time the house could not contain the congregations, and application was made to the lord of the soil, who freely gave the use of the sessions-house, and it was generally crowded.

From some of the northern circuits also there were gratifying accounts of the success of the good work. Concerning Maguiresbridge, Mr. William Herbert reports that forty conversions took place at the December quarterly meeting there, and twenty-five at Fivemiletown; while true religion continued to spread in all quarters of the circuit. At Belfast, it appears, the preaching-house was too small to accommodate the congregations, the number of members continued to increase, and in one month thirty souls were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour.

At Downpatrick, for some years, the Primitive Wesleyans had sustained considerable loss through not having a chapel, nor did they find it easy to procure a suitable site for one. During this period they had the use of the market-house; but as it was used as a place of business, it could not be had at all times when required. Now, however, a plot was obtained, and the people contributed liberally to the erection, so that in a few months it was completed, and on November 9th opened, free of debt. This led to a marked improvement in the congregations. The December lovefeast proved a season of special and abundant spiritual blessing. Amongst the numerous witnesses for Christ was one old man, who said, "Many here have stated the gratitude they feel to God for giving them this house to worship Him in; but surely, there is no one that has a right to feel as I have. More than fifty years ago, that man of God Mr. Wesley preached in this place, then a linen hall, and under that sermon, and near the spot on

which I now stand, the Lord convinced me that I was a sinner, and gave me to prove that He had power on earth to forgive sins. Oh, what gratitude I feel to Him for His loving-kindness to me, from that to the present, and for giving us this house for His service, on a spot so dear to me!"

CHAPTER X.

1829.

At this period the question of Catholic emancipation was warmly and extensively agitated, and although the Methodists, as such, had taken little part in politics, and even now, as a body, took no action, yet as individual citizens they took an open and decided stand against a measure which they believed would be injurious to the best interests of the kingdom. Mr. Ouseley published several pamphlets, and wrote numerous letters to the public papers, both in England and Ireland, strongly opposing the proposal. The ground he took, as stated in writing to the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, was that the Romanists were sworn to maintain the creed of Pope Pius IV., "to condemn, reject, and hold accursed, as heretical, all men, religions, and books opposed to it, and to exterminate them in every way possible;" and that, while affording them the fullest liberty, until these wicked oaths were explicitly and authentically abandoned, no attention should be paid to their claims or petitions to enjoy political privileges. The Rev. William Stewart, in an able letter to the Rev. Joseph Entwisle, takes a different ground, maintaining that the proposed measure would neither conciliate nor satisfy the Roman Catholics; that they would receive it not as a matter of grace, but as an act of justice, for which they would thank, not the Government, but the Catholic Association; and that they would be encouraged to further agitation until they obtained a full restoration of property and the re-establishment of their religion. The subsequent sad history of this country has only too plainly shown the correctness of these views. So far as loyalty and order are concerned, nothing has been gained by a policy of conciliation toward Popery. The large concessions made by Government have been accepted only as instalments, and helps towards gaining complete independence

of British rule. Disloyalty and lawlessness amongst the Romish population prevail more extensively than ever, and are only kept in check by the strong arm of law.

Mr. Ouseley propounded a scheme, which, if any human means could contribute towards making Romanists loyal to a Protestant Government, would have succeeded. His proposal was that a provision should be made to support any priests willing to accept it, on condition that they would neither take remuneration from their people nor suffer any other ecclesiastic to do so. Thus the priests would have been freed from the trammels of their system, and placed in a position in which it would have been their interest to sustain the Government; while instead of paying men for teaching idolatry, it would rather be opening a door to them and their flock to escape from it. Ouseley's conviction was that if this door of escape had been wisely and mercifully opened, many Romanists would have gladly availed themselves of it, and thus passed "from the fœtid puddle of human corruptions to the pure and healing waters of the Gospel of peace and eternal safety."

But to return to the labours of the itinerants. In February, 1829, the New Connexion was deprived of one of its missionaries, Mr. Donaldson, of Lisburn, who, after having laboured under a complication of diseases, borne with Christian fortitude, died in the triumph of faith and full assurance of hope. His place was supplied by the Rev. J. Lyons, who says that at Stonyford and Ballinderry there were large congregations, but, for lack of leaders, no society; at Moyrusk and Broughmore the classes were so large as to require to be divided; at Maze a new society was formed; at Priesthill the chapel was well filled; and at Kilwarlin there was success; while services had been resumed at Ballylough. In the midst of these successes, however, there were many things which retarded the progress of the Society, such as the poverty of the people, the debts on some of the chapels, and the distracted state of the country. Death also removed several of the oldest and firmest friends of the cause, including Messrs. Nathaniel Dickey and George Carlisle. The latter was convinced of sin under the preaching of Mr. Wesley, and soon afterwards obtained peace in believing. The piety of youth he retained until hoary age, and in his dying moments he exclaimed, "Death has lost his sting. I long to depart and be with Christ; for I know that

if this earthly house of my tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Mr. Edward Sullivan, who was appointed by the Primitive Conference to the Down mission, states that the work prospered, and he had many openings for preaching the word of life. At Banbridge there was an increase both in numbers and in holiness. Promising services were commenced in Loughbrickland, which had been long "infamous for vice and immorality." At Waringstown and its vicinity there were many encouraging tokens; while throughout the mission in general the congregations were large and attentive, and in nearly every place included some Romanists. During the year seven new classes were formed, some of the members of which were enabled to rejoice in Christ Jesus, while the others sought earnestly the same blessing.

Mr. James Morrow was appointed to labour at Mallow, and some time after his arrival there were tokens of spiritual improvement—the droppings of a shower, which were followed by a larger outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At the commencement of the year the missionary changed with Mr. Edward Whittle, who was also acknowledged of God, and permitted to see "His goings forth in the sanctuary." A blessed religious awakening began, soon after the interchange, at first silently and amongst a few, and then it spread until it became more conspicuous and general, until about thirty persons were converted to God, many others were convinced of the necessity of a deeper work of grace in their hearts, and some of these were enabled to realize that perfect love which casteth out all fear. "Indeed," says Mr. Whittle, "I do not know that I ever witnessed such a thirst after—yea, and enjoyment of—holiness, as among our friends in this town." Such an account, from a quarter where many things contributed to prevent the lively and extensive progress of religion, was most gratifying.

On April 22nd James Field of Cork writes, "We have blessed times. About eighty, I think, have obtained pardon, and twenty perfect love, within six weeks." The Rev. Thomas Waugh was the junior preacher on the circuit, and such was the estimate of his services entertained by members of the Established Church that on his leaving at the following Conference he was presented, by the leading clergy and laity of the county, with a copy of Matthew

Henry's Commentary, "as an expression of the extent to which he had won their admiration and esteem."

Mr. and Mrs. William Haughton of Dublin, feeling a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the soldiers of Richmond barracks, resolved, if possible, to supply them with a chapel and Methodist means of grace. In accomplishing this object, while William gave of his substance, Bessie collected most, if not all, the money required. When soliciting a donation from the Earl of Roden, his lordship gave her a favourable hearing, and promised to write his reply. "Now, my lord," said she, with unaffected simplicity, "won't you give me a good deal?" and he sent her £20. This was the tenth Methodist chapel erected in the metropolis and its suburbs, and the good effected within its walls never can be estimated here.

The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry had not found Methodism so low in any part of Ireland as on the Drogheda circuit, to which he was now appointed; and "the worst is," he says, "that in many places we have few but Romanists to work upon, and they are not good clay for Methodist brick." As, however, his superintendent, the Rev. Andrew Hamilton, jun., and himself worked in real good earnest, the congregations greatly improved, a prayerful and earnest hope of a revival was awakened, and tokens of the Divine blessing were graciously vouchsafed. Amongst other fruit gathered were an Irish teacher and his wife, who had been Romanists, were converted, and joined the Society. They resided at Kingscourt, where a chapel had been erected about three years previously. On March 10th Mr. Tackaberry writes, "Our gracious God has visited us at Cornakill, near Kingscourt; fourteen or fifteen persons have found peace with God within four weeks, and there is reason to hope the good work will spread." And at the close of the Methodistic year he mentions that about fifty had joined the Society during the twelve months, and thirty-five or forty received pardon of sin.

A meeting was held in Belfast, for the purpose of aiding in the general effort, then in progress, for the liquidation of the Connexional debt. Mr. William M'Connell was called to the chair, and the Rev. William Reilly read two printed addresses on the subject, and further explained the nature of the debt, the means proposed for its extension, and the practical results likely to follow

the success of the effort. It was resolved to respond at once to this appeal, and upwards of £300 was subscribed, which was subsequently increased by contributions from absent friends. On the Committee that carried out this proposal we find the familiar names of Alexander Murphy, Joseph Young, and John Lindsay, as well as William M'Connell, the treasurer. At a leaders' meeting held in the town a month later a letter was read from James Wilson, who had been recently converted, giving the names of a number of boys formed into a class, and calling attention to those whom he considered eligible for membership, as distinguished from those on trial. These were approved of, and brother Wilson was unanimously appointed a leader. Nine months later he was elected superintendent of Donegal square Sunday-school, and thus another of the leading devoted Methodists of Belfast came to the front. Dr. John Aickin was also, at this period, brought into living union with Christ and His people.

The Rev. William Reilly had now been three years on this circuit, where his labours and those of his colleagues were so successful that the Society increased from four hundred and sixty-four members to seven hundred and four. Miss Lutton writes, "In Belfast there is an astonishing revival. It is not surprising there to see ten, fifteen, twenty, or more converted in one meeting. Some find no rest for their souls in the public means, and spend the night in wrestlings with Heaven, till set at liberty." On one occasion this devoted Christian lady went to a meeting where were many anxiously seeking the Lord, and while she pleaded at the throne of grace on their behalf a whole row of penitents seemed simultaneously to lose their burdens and start into newness of life.

On June 24th the Conference of the Primitive Wesleyans commenced its sittings in Dublin. Mr. Alexander Stewart was elected secretary. Four young men were admitted on trial. These included William Craig of Athlone, John Wherry of Tempo, and William C. Rice of Belturbet. The increase in the number of members amounted to two hundred and fifteen.

The Wesleyan Conference began on July 7th, in Cork, under the presidency of the Rev. Jabez Bunting, who was accompanied by the Revs. George Morley and Robert Newton. The Rev. William Stewart was elected secretary, an office which he sus-

tained for two years, and the Rev. John F. Mathews assistant secretary, which office he held for nineteen years. Two preachers were reported as having died during the year—James Irwin, who closed his earthly career in holy triumph, and William Pollock, whose end was peace. The Rev. James Stuart was elected, by seniority, a member of the Legal Conference, in place of the Rev. James Irwin. Four young men were admitted on trial—James, son of the Rev. Matthew Tobias, Robert Huston, William Cather of Omagh, and William Mulloy of Castlebar. At the request of the Earl of Mountcashel, a missionary was appointed to Fermoy. The Rev. Thomas Waugh was appointed treasurer, and the Rev. William Reilly secretary of the Contingent Fund, offices which were sustained by the former for thirty years, and by the latter for fourteen. The Rev. William Ferguson was elected treasurer of the Auxiliary Fund, and the Rev. Robert Masaroon secretary, and they held these positions for twenty-five years. The Rev. William Crook became treasurer of the Chapel Fund, and continued such for thirty-three years. The contributions to the Missionary Society were about four hundred pounds above those of the previous year, and the stations and schools were reported as in an encouraging state of prosperity. Although nearly one thousand members had been added to the Society during the year, yet, owing to emigration, the distracted state of the country, and other causes, the actual increase was only eighty-six.

The Revs. Matthew Tobias, John F. Mathews, and James Tobias were appointed to Belfast, and wisely consolidated the good work of their predecessors. Mr. Matthew Tobias formed a class of young ladies, and Mr. James Tobias of young men, and these, especially the latter, included many who subsequently took a very prominent position in connection with Methodism in Belfast. Amongst the number were Thomas G. Lindsay, William Mullan, Hugh Rea, Thomas Robinson, John Craig, and Henry Anderson, not to refer to more than one "elect lady" who did good service for Christ and His cause.

At this time the origin of the temperance reformation took place. From its beginning, the movement has been associated with religious life. Those who originated it were—some of them, at least—God-fearing and man-loving men; they drew from the

Christian faith the principles which they sought to enforce and the courage which sustained them in the struggle. For many years Christian Churches, as such, did not favour their methods. The sin and the harm of intemperance were not ignored, but the traditions and usages of society—even professedly Christian society—were altogether in opposition to such means. Wesleyan Methodism as a Church organization was not the first to recognize the force of this movement and to assist its efforts, but among Methodists as individuals there have always been found many temperance reformers, and since total abstinence was first recognized, many total abstainers. Against intemperance in the use of strong drink Mr. Wesley declared himself consistently and resolutely. In his days the most manifest form of this evil seems to have been found in connection with distilled spirits, and accordingly he most vigorously attacked and denounced the whole business, in words which are familiar to most of us. He did more, for he laid it down as one of the conditions of membership in his united societies that there should be no buying or selling spirituous liquors, nor any drinking of them except in cases of extreme necessity. The principle which Mr. Wesley so recognized and enforced could not fail, if fairly and fully maintained, to ally Methodism sooner or later with any earnest endeavour to stay the inroads of intemperance.

The Rev. John Edgar of Belfast, having been awakened to a sense of this evil and the necessity for taking a decided stand against it, wrote a stirring letter to the local papers, giving a concise account of temperance work in America, and appealing for help. The editor of the *Guardian* refused to print this epistle, assigning as his reason that he considered the writer demented; but the *Newsletter* was more accommodating, and the letter appeared in its columns on August 14th. The Rev. George W. Carr, of New Ross, read this communication with intense interest, and at once organized a temperance society in the town. After some private conferences, a few friends, who had become convinced of their duty to take combined action in the matter, met in the committee-room of the Religious Tract Society, Waring street, Belfast, on the evening of September 24th, and signed a pledge to abstain from distilled spirits themselves, and not to give them to others except for medicinal

purposes. Amongst the first to put their names to this document were ministers of various Evangelical churches, the Revs. John Edgar and James Morgan, Presbyterians; Thomas Hincks, Episcopalian; John Wilson, Congregationalist; and Matthew Tobias, Methodist.

A society having been thus formed, it was considered desirable to hold a public meeting; but some difficulty arose in securing a suitable place. Professor Edgar appealed to the members of the session of his own church, but they declined to grant the use of their meeting-house for any such purpose. Then, meeting with Mr. Tobias and stating the case to him, he at once placed Donegal square chapel at the service of the ardent temperance advocate, but added that as he himself was about to leave town for his country appointments, he could not be present. Large placards were then printed, announcing the meeting, on reading which the trustees of the chapel were not a little incensed at what their minister had done without their consent, but one of their number suggested that they should not condemn him until after he returned home and they heard his defence. Meanwhile, however, the meeting was held, and in Donegal square Methodist chapel Professor Edgar delivered the first public address in Ireland on Temperance. The evening proved exceedingly unfavourable, yet the house was so crowded that it was impossible to find accommodation for all who desired to obtain admission. The movement was now fairly started, and soon spread north and south, east and west.

Robert Huston was appointed to the Newtownbarry circuit, and before starting from Castlebar, his uncle, a devoted Methodist, said to him, "Now, Robert, in parting I will say to you what Daniel M'Mullen once said to me, 'Expect little from man, but a great deal from God Almighty.' The Lord be with you." This wise counsel often in subsequent years proved helpful to the youthful preacher. On arriving at Newtownbarry, he was cordially received by Mr. Thomas Barber, the leading member of the Society in the town, a man of strong understanding, varied information, and genial spirit, and a good local preacher. An ingenious turn which he gave to a passage of Scripture, when Huston bemoaned the want of his mother, was not inappropriate under the circumstances: "Why, it is not one mother you wil

have now, but a hundred, since the Saviour says, 'Every one that hath forsaken . . . father or mother . . . for My name's sake shall receive an hundred fold.'"

The circuit included several small towns, such as Clonegall, Carnew, Gorey, Ballycanew, and Camolin. There was no chapel then in Gorey, and the services were therefore held in the market-house. After some time a long and narrow malt-house was hired as a place of worship, and here were frequently realized times of abundant spiritual blessing. At one lovefeast in particular all present appeared to feel "the o'erwhelming power of saving grace." One of those who witnessed for Christ was a poor, illiterate woman, who lived in a cabin, behind a ditch, about a mile from the town. That morning she had borrowed a cloak to come to the meeting, and during its course walked up the aisle until she came near the pulpit, and then said, "When I woke this mornin' I found it was rainin'. I thought first, How will I get to the lovefeast? But I thought ag'in, My heart is there, an' I'll make my oul' body thrudge afther it." A homely saying, but how full of reproof and instruction to many! At length a chapel was built there, towards which Mrs. Digby Foulkes of Dublin gave and collected ten pounds.

At Clonegall the services were held in the house of old Mr. Sherlock, who had once, with his daughter on his back, walked to Newtownbarry to hear Mr. Wesley preach. This old saint was a timid but exemplary man, a Mr. Fearing, who, whatever his apprehensions were, "would not go back." After his death, the place of meeting was transferred to the residence of Mr. William Hopkins, a faithful leader and local preacher, who for more than a half a century acted as a home missionary in that locality. He was wont to traverse all the country round, in order to bring the scattered and neglected Protestants to hear the Gospel in his house, and thus many souls were saved.

A place, some three miles from Newtownbarry, called Sherwood, where Mr. and Mrs. Philip Butler resided, became the scene of a remarkable work of God. Mrs. Butler was a Christian lady of exalted piety, who had been led by Mrs. Arthur Jones to hear the preaching of the Gospel, and had been converted through the preaching of the Rev. Samuel Wood. Mr. Butler received what he called "the heavenly telegram of

pardon," while his wife pleaded with God on his behalf. No sooner did he pass from death unto life than he began zealously to seek the salvation of his neighbours and friends, and the Lord spared him long to witness and work for Christ, so that many will be his "joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus." One of those converted was a young man, named Benjamin Bayly, who when a class was formed at Sherwood was one of the first enrolled as members; and his piety and natural talents soon led to his being called into a public sphere of usefulness. Even then there were scintillations of the buoyant wit, the glowing fancy, and the homely but fervid eloquence for which he afterwards became distinguished. Preaching once from "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness," he made wickedness the chariot in which the sinner sat, while the devil held the whip and reins, and drove him pell-mell to perdition!

A striking instance of conversion took place at the first meeting of the above class—that of the venerable mother of Mr. Butler. At fourteen years of age she was convinced of sin, when on a visit to Oldtown, where the preachers used to visit. On her return home, she was considered dull and ill; the doctor was sent for, and he ordered her into society. Having been invited to spend an evening at the house of the minister of the parish, and being asked to sing, she sang one of Wesley's hymns, for which the clergyman's daughter slapped her on the face. Her good impressions remained for some years after her marriage; but on emigrating to Canada, she embraced Arian principles. Yet from the time of her first awakening until her return from Canada, this year, a period of half a century, she found no rest, and her mental agony at times was unutterable. At the service this morning, after several had spoken with melting power, Mr. Butler inquired, "Mother, have you no mercies to be thankful for?" "Yes, child," she said, "I have," and then, under an awful sense of her guilt and misery, outpoured the confessions, petitions, and hopes of a full heart. While speaking, she believed, obtained a conscious sense of pardon, and bore witness to it, to the inexpressible joy of all present. Two years later she died, rejoicing in the God of her salvation.

The good work on the Drogheda circuit continued to deepen and spread. At Kingscourt not only did the converts prove

faithful, but the young men were like a flame of fire wherever they went; at Drumcar a few were brought to God; and at Dundalk eleven professed to have obtained the pardon of sin. The cloud then moved in the direction of Drogheda. At a class-meeting two young men, who had been in deep distress about their souls, related how the Lord had removed their load of guilty woe. Then at a Sunday-evening prayer-meeting twenty-seven came forward seeking mercy, several obtained the desire of their hearts, and thus the work moved on. Many wondered to see any stir in cold, Pharisaic, High-Church Drogheda; even some of the leaders looked on with fear and suspicion, but others joined in right heartily. The persons converted were in general powerfully awakened, and drank deeply of the wormwood and the gall. One of those led to the Saviour was a lad named James Elliott, who subsequently emigrated to Canada, entered the Methodist ministry there, and rose to be President of the Conference in 1867-68.

The Rev. Alexander Mackey was appointed to the Antrim mission, and with that enterprise for which he was so remarkable, at once proceeded to make numerous repairs and improvements in the old chapel, during which the services were held in his own house. Here his niece, Elizabeth M'Lorinan, subsequently Mrs. John M'Dowell, was brought under deep conviction of sin, and continued for some months in such agony of mind as excited general sympathy. At length the Lord lifted upon her the light of His countenance, and made her unspeakably happy in His love. In all the ardour of new-born zeal, she began to work for Christ, teaching in the Sunday-school, and collecting around her a number of girls, who soon became anxious about their souls, and were therefore formed into a society class, of which she was appointed to take charge. Leader and members were all most exemplary in their conduct and devoted in their spirit. They dressed with scrupulous plainness and simplicity, all finery, even to the wearing of a ribbon, being carefully eschewed, while often these pious girls withdrew to fields and other retired places to unite in earnest prayer for Heaven's blessing. Nor did the young convert confine her labours to those who were immediately committed to her care, but also visited the sick and poor, in which the Lord owned her efforts in the conversion of several, who lived and died rejoicing in God their Saviour.

Towards the close of the year the Rev. T. Robinson, the Superintendent of the Missions of the New Connexion in Ireland, visited Armagh, and gives a stirring account of his reception. On repairing to the preaching-room, to his surprise he found the upper part of the door nailed up, and a number of Romanists present, determined, if possible, to prevent a service being held. The police were therefore sent for, and thus the meeting proceeded, but in the midst of a scene of wild disorder, the people shouting, yelling, and making the greatest noise during the whole time. A second attempt to preach was made on the same day, but with similar results, which excited the sympathy of some of the respectable inhabitants, who offered gratis rooms, where the Methodists might worship God unmolested. Meanwhile the Lord took the cause into His own hands, visiting some of the delinquents with signal marks of His displeasure. The ringleader of the rowdies was found in his bed, dead, and a woman who belonged to the same party was called suddenly hence. On a subsequent occasion, during a service in the market-place, a large crowd assembled, the Romanists jeered, hissed, and showed every mark of contempt, and even one of the officers of the chief magistrate attempted to pull the preacher down, but was prevented. That evening nine pounds was offered towards the erection of a chapel in the city.

The reports from the mission-stations of the Primitive Wesleyan Society were, on the whole, cheering. From the county of Wicklow Mr. Daniel Henderson writes that he had secured four new preaching-places. These were at Rathdrum, to which the missionary had been invited by the Rector, the Rev. William S. Guinness; Cappagh, where there was a good congregation; Tinahely, in which the services were held in the market-house; and the neighbourhood of Baltinglass. Mr. George Revington, of Skibbereen, says that at Macroom they had been much inconvenienced for want of suitable premises, and had at length obtained the use of the new court-house, but as this was only a temporary relief, they were resolved, if possible, to erect a house; while at Skibbereen, to meet the requirements of the congregation, the preaching-house had been enlarged to nearly double its previous dimensions.

On the county of Donegal mission Mr. Thomas Boyce found

much opposition, yet was encouraged with tokens of the Divine blessing. At Raphoe there was a prosperous society, but hampered for some time for want of a suitable place for public services, which at length was supplied, in the sessions-room, kindly granted by the bishop of the diocese. Here large and deeply affected congregations attended. At Castlederg there was an overflowing audience in the market-house; and at Lifford, and a place about five miles from Letterkenny, school-houses were placed at the disposal of the missionary by the Church clergy. The Rev. R. S. Brooke, then a curate in this neighbourhood, tells of the difficulty he had to contend with from "a fulish auld Methody body" called Hatty Gallasp. She was daughter to a bygone parish clerk, and was born and bred amidst Psalm tunes. Her voice was hopelessly cracked. She was as deaf as a post, and would not give in to any modern airs, but persisted in rejecting all but those which "her feather and her sung on Sabbaths in the wee gallery of Conwall church, when Rector Span was in it." Thus any little harmony in the singing was jeopardized by this amateur, who generally was half a dozen notes before, or a bar behind the other singers. Mr. Brooke once had the hardihood to expostulate, and suggested that she "should not sing quite so loud," when she answered, "I had a cowld, my dear, I had a cowld thon time; but now I'se got quet of it, and praise be to the Maker, if I do not gie them a skirl on the Auld Hundredth next time, I'll gie yees leave to say, what neabody ever said of Hatty Gallasp or of her feather afore her, that she could na sing oot." Accordingly, when the occasion came she dashed out, upsetting every voice about her, holding time, tune, and harmony at defiance, and after the rest had concluded, continuing the strains, as she executed a prolonged solo, her poor old shaking voice quivering and quavering amidst the rafters "like an insane skylark in bronchitis." Yet Hatty sang with her whole heart.

Mr. John Ramsey, who was appointed to Londonderry, obtained access to Inch, an island on which there were three places of worship, a church attended by only ten or twelve persons, a meeting-house without a minister, and a Roman Catholic chapel. One day the Methodist preacher took a walk along the strand, from which a boat used to cross; it was impressed on his mind that he should go there, and accordingly he resolved to do so.

The wind blew rather stiffly, so the boatmen said they would wait until it became calmer. As they delayed, a man came up and expressed his intention of accompanying them. Mr. Ramsey was asked what object he had in view in visiting Inch, and candidly replied, "To preach the Gospel to the people." "Very good," said they, "but where will you preach?" "I don't know a soul on the island, but I'll go and preach wherever the Lord opens my way." The stranger then said, "If you come with me I will introduce you to the most respectable farmers on the island, and you can sleep at my house." That night the servant of God preached in the house of his host, on the next evening in the Freemasons' Hall, to a large congregation, and subsequently obtained the use of the Presbyterian meeting-house, which was crowded, so eager were the people to hear the message of mercy.

CHAPTER XI.

1830.

The Rev. Adam Averell travelled much through the kingdom, and says he found "the work going on well everywhere, and the preachers more than ever sanguine and zealous." During these tours he opened several new Primitive Wesleyan chapels, including those at Maghon, Scotchstreet, Strabane, and Glenavy. The last-mentioned building was erected through the efforts and liberality of Mr. John Moore Johnston, who about eight years previously, on his brother Philip becoming a Methodist, was invited by him to a lovefeast at Moira, and most favourably impressed with what he heard. Four years later another opportunity was afforded him of hearing a Methodist preacher, and then he invited the itinerant to his house at Glenavy, as one of his regular stopping-places. A class was soon formed, of which Mr. Johnston became a member, and two of the Antrim leaders met it in turns, each alternate Sunday. These services were greatly blessed, and the number of members increased rapidly. Then a Sunday-school was formed, and as the place became too straitened, a preaching-house was erected. Mr. Johnston brought up his family in the fear of the Lord and in loving union with Methodism, so that they have been, ever since its introduction, the chief support of the cause in the village.

A small Primitive Wesleyan society having been formed about twelve months at Loughbrickland, the cause prospered to such an extent as to render the erection of a chapel here necessary. Accordingly, application for a suitable site was made by Mr. Joseph Payne to the Marquis of Downshire, who readily granted it, and thus the needed house was built and opened. New and hopeful preaching-places were also secured by the missionary at Dromore and Rathfryland.

On the Charlemont circuit, where Messrs. William Pattyson, James Robinson, jun., and William Craig were stationed, a very blessed revival began in the vicinity of Tullyroan, spread all round the neighbourhood, and soon extended to Charlemont. At one meeting, held at Loughgall, about twenty persons professed to have obtained peace with God; at another service, at Tullyroan, about eighteen acknowledged having received the same blessing; and at a quarterly meeting, held in Charlemont, such numbers were present that the adjoining parochial school was dismissed in order to accommodate those who could not get into the chapel, while about thirty were led to religious decision. At the close of the year it was estimated that from two to three hundred had been converted, while, after having filled all vacancies in the membership, there was an increase of one hundred and eighty-six.

At a meeting of the Belfast Wesleyan leaders, on February 22nd, the Rev. John F. Mathews desired advice as to how he should act in reference to a person who never attended class-meeting, yet always paid quarterage, wished to be considered a member of the Society, and desired to get her ticket. It was the decided opinion of those present that, as they did not sell tickets, no persons should get them who did not make it a matter of conscience to attend class-meeting at every opportunity. Four months later the chairman, the Rev. Matthew Tobias, having called attention to the considerable improvement which had taken place in the circuit funds, the stewards informed the meeting that the allowance to the married preachers on the circuit for board-money did not exceed thirteen shillings and sixpence per week, and proposed that it should be increased to eighteen shillings, which was unanimously agreed to. This is probably the earliest recorded intimation of attention being given to increased ministerial support.

Mr. Shillington of Portadown having planned and built Tavanagh House, no doubt expecting to be spared for several years to work for Christ, it proved otherwise. Towards the close of the previous year he preached from John iv. 14, at Ballymagerny, with freedom and unction. A leader accompanied him about a mile on his way home, and narrated a strange dream that he recently had, and that had aroused his fears. "Well," said Mr. Shillington, "you and I will soon pass over the stream; but I'll go first," and

so it happened. The same day, when about half a mile from Portadown, his horse fell, and he himself was hurt. Disease set in, which for several months shifted from one part of the body to another, until April, when he was completely prostrated. Although it was difficult for him to speak, he repeatedly bore testimony to the power of Christ to save. To his son-in-law, Mr. Paul, he said, "Oh, William, if I were like you, I would be preaching to all around!" And to another he replied, "I don't feel as much joy as I thought I would have. I feel myself a poor sinner, and have only the atonement of Christ to look to, and trusting on that, I know I am safe." On the following morning one of his children, who was wetting his dying lips, said, "Father, you will soon drink the new wine of the heavenly kingdom," and he answered, "Yes, yes." Life lingered for only two hours longer, when he fell under "the shuddering dew of death," and his redeemed spirit escaped home to God.

Although in his sixty-ninth year, the venerable and indefatigable Gideon Ouseley prosecuted his labours with unabated vigour and success, travelling as extensively and preaching as frequently as at any former period of his life. Falsehood, in all its various and insidious forms, he attacked with heroic daring and marvellous skill. Some time previous to this a friar named Brennan affected to conform to the Established Church, but afterwards in Dundalk recanted, and published an elaborate penitential address, highly calculated to lull and ensnare unsuspecting Protestants. Well aware of the character of this policy, so common on such occasions, Ouseley published an able and conclusive reply, in which he proved the doctrinal teaching of the address to be in direct opposition to the Word of God, and therefore false; insisted that the pretended friar believed neither his own doctrines nor the arguments by which they were supported; and urged him or his priests to reply, if they were able; but no answer appeared.

Mr. Ouseley, indeed, had to use "the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left." About the same time a clergyman of the Established Church in the county of Fermanagh violently assailed the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists as the worst of heresies. The people were much affected by this attack, and felt an earnest desire that the missionary would write a reply. He did so, and it was considered one of his happiest con-

troversial efforts.* Perhaps it derived its superior excellence from Ouseley's opinion of his opponent. In many other controversies he was convinced that he had to oppose wickedness, duplicity, and fraud, as well as false doctrine. In this case, much as he disapproved of the sentiments he had to oppose, he believed that his opponent was a conscientious Christian man. While, therefore, he refuted with great acuteness the allegations put forth, traced their plausible error through its various sinuosities, and displayed an equal acquaintance with the Bible and the best productions of divines of the English Church, he treated his adversary with Christian candour and courtesy, and at the same time fully maintained what he believed to be the great truths of the Gospel.

Writing from Tuam, the missionary says that for several years not a drop of his blood had been spilled, but that on the evening before, being assailed by a shower of stones, turf, dirt, and eggs, many of them had hit him, and one turf having struck his mouth, made him "bleed a little." In fact, two teeth were knocked out, yet he did not desist from preaching; he only paused now and then to relieve himself of blood, closed the service with solemn prayer, and retired under a shower of stones. During the erection of the Roman Catholic cathedral in this town, Ouseley told the masons they were not building it solid enough; and when they asked why, said that they would have Protestant clergymen preaching in it one day. These words were often quoted by the people, who affirmed the prophecy would one day be fulfilled.

In Dublin the Rev. David Stuart, minister of the Secession Church, delivered a course of lectures on the Calvinistic controversy, in which he bitterly assailed the Methodists and their religious views. These addresses were published in 1827, and appeared again in 1830. In these he says, "Arminianism is the Popery of Protestantism." "Wesley's Predestination Calmly Considered is a most uncandid and unscriptural attack on the doctrine of Free Grace," and "The Anti-predestinarian is opposed to right reason; his doctrine robs God of His glory, deprives Him of His essential attributes, and leads to Atheism." Such statements were not permitted to pass unchallenged; for the Rev. William Stewart took this divine in hand, and in an

* Entitled *Predestination-Arminianism; or, Calvinists and Methodists United by the Power of Truth.*

able pamphlet, entitled *Scripture Truth Vindicated, Misrepresentations Corrected and Objections Refuted*, clearly showed how unjust and unscriptural were the charges preferred against Methodism.

Miss Lutton paid a visit to the metropolis, where she spent six months, leading a life of almost incessant activity. She had a weekly meeting, attended by members of her own sex, many of whom were ladies of high social position. She obtained access to the Bridewell, and lectured and prayed with its unfortunate inmates, numbers of whom wept as she spoke, and on leaving, earnestly entreated her to return. She also did a good deal in visiting ladies, "who took it into their wise heads that she was doing them good," as well as the poor, the sick, and the afflicted; and thus a blessed work was done for the Master.

The Rev. Dr. Clarke, accompanied by the Rev. James Everett, visited the north of Ireland, and was the guest of John Cromie Esq., Portstewart, a gentleman for whom he entertained the highest esteem and Christian affection. On Sunday morning April 25th, he preached one of the missionary sermons in Coleraine, and says, "The congregation was large and deeply attentive. The Mayor and some of the magistrates were present, the former being one of the collectors." The Rev. James Everett preached there in the evening, while the learned doctor discoursed in the Portstewart chapel, "as full as it could be of anxious and deeply attentive hearers."

The English missionary deputation to the south were the Revs. George Marsden and Philip Garrett, and their plan included Clonmel, to which they were accompanied by the Revs. William Reilly and John Feely. The meeting was held in the Wesleyan chapel; the chair was occupied by the Rev. Dr. Bell, an Episcopal clergyman, and the circuit ministers were the Revs. David Waugh and Robert Masaroon. Before the hour appointed for opening, the house was densely crowded by a wild and unruly rabble, that had succeeded in breaking up a previous meeting of the Bible Society, and intended to serve the Methodists in a similar way. The rowdies, however, did not make any serious disturbance until Mr. Marsden, the mover of the first resolution, had spoken for some time, when suddenly they raised a loud and horrid yell, showed every symptom of resorting to violence, and turned the

meeting into a scene of wild and appalling tumult. Mr. Waugh reasoned and remonstrated, on the grounds of the penalty incurred by such gross interruptions; Mr. Masaroon, in silvery and persuasive tones, pleaded that the service should be allowed to proceed; and the chairman ever and anon stood up, saying, "Gentlemen, what is your object? what is your object, gentlemen?" But all in vain; the disturbers only became more noisy and turbulent than ever. Mr. Marsden sat with hands clasped and a look of deep sorrow, while Mr. Garrett started on his feet and seemed about to leave in despair, when Mr. Reilly rose and succeeded in some measure in stilling the tumult; but perceiving it was only temporary, closed saying, "Now, boys, listen to Mr. Feely, who will address you in your own loved tongue." Feely at once stood up, took the hint, and for about an hour, in language the most tender and pathetic, pleaded in Irish the cause of Christ. The turmoil immediately ceased, and the rowdies listened to his earnest appeal with increasing attention and interest. Well might Reilly say, "It was a sublime sight, such as I had never before witnessed." When the speaker, drawing to a close, described the death of Stephen, and falling on his knees on the platform, with uplifted hands and streaming eyes, represented the proto-martyr as praying for his murderers, the effect was electrical. The excited people were overwhelmed, awe-stricken, and enraptured, and instead of tearing down the platform and abusing its occupants, sought for Mr. Feely that they might chair him through the town, an ordeal from which he narrowly escaped by slipping away unnoticed with a friend.

At the anniversary of the Missionary Society in London the Rev. Thomas Waugh represented Ireland. At the public meeting in City road chapel the Earl of Mountcashel presided, and Mr. Waugh was one of the speakers. "I love my country," said the latter, "and deplore her desolations; but shall I be looked upon as ungrateful if, for a moment, I touch upon her evils and narrate her woes? In Ireland ignorance abounds, and the natural and necessary fruit of ignorance is vice. In many parts of the country, society seems almost disorganized, and there is distress such as is not to be met with in any other part of Europe. It may be said that in England crimes are perpetrated of as black a dye as in Ireland. I allow it; but in this land public indignation

pursues the perpetrators, whereas in Ireland sympathy goes with the wrong-doers. Let it not be said that political disabilities and misrule have produced this. The truth is, the majority of our countrymen are under the shackles of a degrading superstition, from which they can be delivered only by the light of life; and let but this arise upon them, and great effects will be produced. It may be asked, What has been the fruit of our labours? A stand has been made against evils which would have overwhelmed us; beacons have been erected here and there, which will never be extinguished until the fulness of time come; and thousands are this day in glory who owe their happiness and everlasting safety to the labours of our missionaries."

The reports from the various mission-stations were of a cheering character. At Celbridge and Trim it is stated some new places had been opened and two additional classes formed. At Tarbert a neat chapel had been set apart for public worship, and the day-school was well attended. At Ballymote eleven houses had been opened for the preaching of the word, three Sunday-schools, with one hundred and twenty scholars, had been commenced, and a commodious chapel finished. At Donegal twelve new preaching-places had been obtained, many souls had been awakened and converted, and after making up for all losses by death and emigration, one hundred members added to the Society. On the Rathmelton and Stranorlar mission, where Messrs. Remmington and Saul were stationed, a very gracious revival had taken place. Upwards of seventy persons were converted, nine new classes were formed, and in some places the membership was trebled. There was a net increase of one hundred, with eighty-four on trial. Seven Sunday-schools also were commenced, so that there were no less than six hundred and fifty-three Sunday-school scholars on the mission. At Magherafelt several new places were opened, some additional classes were formed, and the day-schools prospered, while the Sunday-schools contained about twelve hundred children.

The Conference of the Primitive Wesleyans commenced its sittings on June 30th, with Mr. Thomas M'Fann as secretary. Henry Taylor of Dublin, James Moffett of the Clones circuit, and William Moore were admitted on trial. The increase in the number of members returned was nearly four hundred.

"The Lord," it is said, "has manifestly revived His work in Dublin, and also graciously opened our way to new places and widened the sphere of our operations." The missionary department especially had risen to such a position of importance that it was resolved to appoint Mr. George Revington as a general secretary, who should visit the circuits and missions, and with whom the missionaries should hold a regular quarterly correspondence. This plan proved so successful that in the course of three years it was found necessary to appoint a number of persons to labour as schoolmasters and Scripture-readers.

The Wesleyan Conference began in Dublin on July 6th. The Rev. James Townley, D.D., presided, and was accompanied by the Rev. John James. Thomas, son of the Rev. John Nesbitt, William Burnside of Ballybay, John Byrne, William Starkey, and James Hughes were received on trial. Two brethren had died during the year—John Kerr, who "finished his course happy in God," and Blakely Dowling, who, "with a hope full of immortality, calmly fell asleep in Jesus." The increase reported in the number of members was fifty-one, and would have been much greater but for a serious loss of five hundred and eleven by emigration. A searching inquiry was made into the financial circumstances of the ministers, as several, owing to the severe privations they had to endure, had become involved more or less in debt.

In reply to the question, "What is the judgment of the Conference in respect to the use of ardent spirits?" it is said, "That we enforce the Rules instituted by the Founder of our Society, which prohibit the buying or selling of spirituous liquors, or drinking them unless in cases of extreme necessity, and we cordially approve of the principle of the societies lately established for the encouragement and promotion of temperance." A strong resolution was passed in favour of the abolition of Negro slavery. It was agreed that the plan previously adopted, of young men on trial preaching a special sermon at the end of four years, should be dispensed with, and that instead they should preach before their respective district meetings each year during their probation, and also that much more attention should be given to the examination of candidates and preachers on trial. A plan recommended by the Book Committees in London for the relief of the Book Room in Dublin was accepted. By this arrangement

the latter was given up; all books thenceforward were to be ordered from London, and the Committee there agreed to grant £500 per annum until the Irish debt was paid off, and then to give each year £300 to the Irish Contingent Fund. It was directed that a list of questions, relating to the proper business of the district meetings, should be prepared and forwarded to the chairmen, "in order to promote accuracy and uniformity" in the order of business.

The public services of the Conference were largely attended and of unusual interest. This was specially the case with the missionary meeting held in Abbey street chapel on July 12th, when a speech of the Rev. John James made a wonderful impression. Having referred to a converted Negro slave, Pierra Sallah, whose liberty the Committee were anxious to purchase, that he might be employed as a missionary, the matter was at once taken up, and money continued to be forwarded to the platform until the required amount was contributed.

Soon after Conference, a chapel was opened at Ringsend, being the eleventh Methodist preaching-house erected in the metropolis, and in it a Sunday-school was commenced, under the superintendence of Mr. Samuel M'Comas, who continued in charge of it for nine years. Subsequently he became connected in succession with the Abbey street, Poolbeg street, and Dalkey schools; and although his other Church duties became increasingly numerous, he never lost his interest in the children, and never appeared happier than when talking to them about spiritual things. It was at this time Mr. M'Comas identified himself with the Abbey street Society, a connection that continued for about forty years, and involved his sustaining the offices of leader and circuit-steward, as well as holding other important positions in the Church, which he did with Christian zeal and fidelity.

In September William M'Clure was received on trial into the New Connexion Conference, and appointed to Belfast. The preaching-places on his plan were York street, Milltown, Falls road, Newtownbreda, Saltwater bridge, and Lagan street, as well as a number of private houses. At the end of three months he writes, with regard to his circuit, that the leaders evinced a praiseworthy readiness to co-operate with the preachers in the great work of Christian philanthropy. Before and around them

lay a ripe and extensive harvest. At Lagan street the congregations were very attentive, but persons in very humble circumstances. At Sandy row the audiences were only middling, owing to the lack of regular services. In Newtownbreda there was usually a numerous and attentive company, who had suffered much, but whose losses were in some measure made up by the zeal of their leader. In Milltown the congregations were increasing and the society prospering; a new opening at Woodburn promised well; and at the administration of the Lord's Supper in York street there was pleasing evidence of success, in several young persons coming forward and publicly testifying their faith in the atonement.*

The venerable and indefatigable Ouseley was now at length stricken down. Having preached for three months, at from sixteen to twenty-one times each week, without a day's intermission, when leaping his mare across a fence in the county of Leitrim, she stumbled and fell, while he felt something in his heel give way with a loud crack—the Achilles tendon was broken. Yet he proceeded to his appointment, and not only "preached that night to the assembled crowd with great freedom, but on the following day opened a new chapel in Drumshanbo, and in response to a pressing invitation from a clergyman in Mohill, spent five days there, preaching night and day to amazing crowds of Romanists and Protestants." Many souls were converted, and the whole country round appeared to be moved. He then returned home, and for nearly eight months was not able to leave his house, yet in patience he possessed his soul. "Here I lie in peace," he says, "upon a bed of doubtless salutary affliction, under the care of a kind wife and a merciful Father who neither slumbers nor sleeps." When able, he seized the opportunity of sketching a plan for the employment of Scripture-readers, sent it to the Missionary Committee, and offered an annual subscription towards the carrying of it out.

The Rev. Robert Huston was reappointed, with the Rev. John Carey, to the Newtownbarry circuit. Here the thrilling accounts which he heard of the revival in the country sixteen years previously set him to long and pray for a return of such days of grace. Nor did he plead in vain. At first there were drops that

* Memoir of the Rev. W. M'Clure, pp. 60-61.

betokened the coming shower. Then at Ballycanew two or three professed to have received the pardoning mercy of God. The flame thus kindled soon spread, and conversions began to multiply, until every week sinners were led to the Saviour. Field-meetings were sometimes occasions of uncommon power. At one of these, held near Clough, there was a large attendance, and before a word was uttered the people wept on every side. A young scapegrace stood on a ditch, facing the congregation, and by various antics endeavoured to divert and distract attention; but when, after preaching, a form was placed for penitents he was the first to come forward, cut to the heart and crying aloud for mercy. The lovefeasts also were seasons of great refreshing and blessing. Hugh, son of the Rev. Alexander Moore, rode from Rathdrum to one at Ballycanew, a distance of about twenty-five miles, in ardent expectation that he would obtain mercy there; and though it was a blessed meeting and he was greatly encouraged, he did not obtain the desire of his heart until some time subsequently. Bible-classes and house-to-house visitation were also greatly owned of God.

Carnew, on this circuit, remained for a long time

> "unwatered still, and dry,
> While the dew on all around
> Fell plenteous from the sky."

The congregations were large and attentive, but Calvinism being rife, religion became more a matter of opinion or of angry controversy than of personal experience and enjoyment. Edward Kehoe, a plain man, a zealous leader and exhorter and a man of prayer, who lived here, proved a true yokefellow, giving hearty and self-denying co-operation in promoting the work of God. One fruit of his conversion was fervent longing, followed by aggressive effort, for the conversion of his Roman Catholic neighbours. This, of course, roused the ire of the priest, who exclaimed, one day, in haranguing his flock, "Good Christian people, what has the world come to? Ned Kehoe, the brogue-maker, is turned sowl-saver!" A suggestive speech, for the parties to labour for the conversion of others are such as have themselves turned from sin to God, and the object at which to aim is not to make proselytes, but to save. Carnew was hard soil, and therefore it was arranged that special prayer should be

offered on its behalf all round the circuit, and not in vain. The next time Mr. Huston visited the town, at a prayer-meeting after preaching, some fourteen persons, convinced of sin, came forward to the penitents' bench, crying for mercy. Amongst these was John Walker, who was taught the way of God more perfectly, and obtained mercy under the ministry of the Rev. John Hadden, and subsequently entered the itinerancy. The preaching-place was a large room, stretching over the top of two or three houses. It was at this or a similar meeting, the windows being open, that the people in the street hearing a loud wail of penitence, inquired one of another, "Where's the fight? Where's the fight?" It was a good fight against sin and Satan. This revival was distinguished by the stability of its converts. Forty-four years subsequently the Rev. Robert Huston writes, "Most of those 'who abide and remain,' whether in Ireland or in distant lands, 'continue unto this day' to hold fast their integrity. Nearly a score of preachers, travelling and local, were amongst the fruit of this gracious visitation; and I am free to confess my persuasion that the stability of this work, and its wide-spread and enduring results, were largely owing, under God, to Mr. Carey's wisdom, fidelity, and fatherly care." One of the converts referred to by Mr. Huston was Henry J. Giles, a native of Clone, who subsequently entered the itinerancy.

The Rev. William Crook was appointed to Tralee, where a chapel had been recently erected, and where the Lord gave him some precious souls for his hire. One of these was a lad of fifteen, George Grant, a native of Cork, who one Sabbath was powerfully impressed under the preaching of the word, and at the subsequent lovefeast apprehended the nature of saving faith, as a little girl, twelve years old, described her conversion. He then found "redemption in the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins," rose and bore a grateful testimony to what God had done for his soul, and great was the joy of both the minister and his flock. Five years later that dear lad was received on trial as a Methodist preacher. Mr. Crook was also the means of introducing Methodism into Killorglin. A young man, named John Martin, having been awakened through the ministry of the Rev. William Richey, and led to seek a conscious sense of sins forgiven, no sooner obtained the blessing than he joined the Society and began

to work for Christ. Believing that those who had been made a blessing to himself might also be instrumental in leading others to the Saviour, he got permission from his master to invite the Methodist preacher to the town. Mr. Crook at once responded to the call, and thus Methodism obtained a footing there. Mr. Martin, on his settlement in life, opened his house to the servants of God, and received them with kind and cordial hospitality, and in time two of his sons entered the itinerancy.

The Rev. John Armstrong was appointed to the Donegal mission, and in this extensive field his labours were greatly owned of God. In the town itself, permission having been given by the Conference, a neat chapel, capable of seating about two hundred persons, was erected on a spot previously so notorious for wickedness that it was called "the flags of damnation;" but soon the new edifice could not accommodate even the members of the Society that assembled at the quarterly lovefeasts. It was no uncommon thing for numbers to crowd round the door and windows, and in these places not only listen to others, but narrate their own religious experience. Entries like the following abound in the Diary of Mr. Armstrong: "At Ballintra a crowd attended; our class is nearly doubled." "At Dunkineely quarterly meeting the chapel was quite full, the meeting was very good, and several souls were converted to God. There were not less than fifty on their knees together, crying for mercy." "At Ballyederlan I preached to a full house, and am thinking of dividing the class," it having become so large. "At Ardara I preached three times, to great congregations. This country is in a blessed state." "At Doorian the house was more than full, and all seemed to hear for eternity." "At Ballyshannon I preached four times, and met forty in class. We are rising here. A few months ago we had hardly a friend in the town; now we have six or seven families." "At Bundoran, where we have had a gracious outpouring of the Spirit, we have a few zealous and steady friends, who have been made a blessing." "Ballintra lovefeast was one of the best I ever held. We had ten souls converted, and many convinced." When the year closed there was an increase of one hundred and thirty in the membership.

Early in the century a preacher, probably Mr. William Kidd, had visited Ballynure, and preached on horseback in the street.

Others also had followed at intervals, and openings had been obtained in the adjoining country at Ballygowan and Ballylagan; but no footing was secured in the village until now. Mr. Beatty, an English Methodist, came to reside here, as manager of a cotton mill, and thus a class was formed, of which Benjamin Elliott * of Ballycor was appointed the leader. Other meetings also were held, and were largely attended.

From the Lisburn station of the Primitive Wesleyans Mr. John Noble writes, "The Lord has been graciously reviving His work in some parts of this mission, particularly at Ballinderry, where the Society is much increased and the people greatly stirred up. In this good work I have been assisted by a young man who preaches locally, and whose labours have been profitable to the people. I preach in the house of one man who was formerly a Roman Catholic, and in that of another who is still one, but has ceased to attend the services of his Church, and has been awakened to concern for his soul. We have now and again a good many of that persuasion who come to our meeting, and if I may judge from their spirit and conduct, they are likely to be profited." †

* Father of John Elliott of Frederick street chapel, Belfast.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1831, p. 97.

CHAPTER XII.

1831.

The attention of Dr. Adam Clarke having been called to the destitute state of some Protestant districts of the country, in respect to the means of education, he wrote to the Rev. Samuel Harpur of Coleraine for further information on the subject, and was informed, although much had been done, much remained to be done; that there were numerous populous districts without schools; and that his taking up the case of Ireland, as he had done that of Shetland, would do incalculable good. The venerable doctor, therefore, formed a plan for the establishment of six daily schools in neglected districts of the counties of Antrim and Derry, and in carrying out this project was generously aided by the Hon. Miss Sophia Ward and other friends. The first of these schools opened was at Portrush, on January 1st, 1831, when thirty-seven children were present; but soon the attendance was doubled. The second commenced was at Cashel. Having succeeded thus far, Dr. Clarke again visited his native country, and having arrived at Belfast, proceeded to Antrim, Coleraine, and Portstewart, in each of which, as well as in Ballycastle and Ballyclare, he preached to large and appreciative congregations. At Portstewart a good woman who was present left in high dudgeon, saying, "I'll ne'er gang to hear Doctur Clairk mair; he sais that a' the folks is sinners! Vera pretty indeed! I'll na hear him ag'in; I'd gae fowr mile sunner." The doctor, with great satisfaction, inspected the schools at Portrush and Cashel, and started others at Prolusk, Billy, Gorran, and Lissan. Some little misunderstanding arose as to the means by which these schools would be supported, and the danger of their coming into conflict with those established by the Missionary Committee; but this was soon dispelled by explana-

tions, and the doctor exulted in the accomplishment of his noble and benevolent purpose.

Miss Lutton paid a visit to this district of country, and laboured with characteristic zeal and success. The following testimony, from a countrywoman, with a huge handkerchief tied on her cap, was encouraging: "I live," said she to the lady preacher, "five miles frae this toon, and I jist gaed in after ye, to speer about whan ye'd hae a meetin' here ag'in; for our hale kintra-side was a' doon wi' ye whan ye had yer last gathering in Bushmills, an' we never saw as mony tears drappit on a dry floor afore, an' we'll jist stap o'er and see it ag'in, if we only heard the time for it." Miss Lutton engaged to send her word, and she left in great spirits, saying, "Do, dear, an' Jean M'Conaghy will be wi' ye in a crack, an' a' the neebors at her heels."

On one occasion when Gideon Ouseley visited Armagh, where he intended to reside, to be near, as he said, the Romish Archbishop, he called upon the Rev. Dr. Stewart, rector of Loughgilly, about three miles from Markethill. The doctor invited the missionary to stay for dinner, which he consented to do, on condition of being allowed to preach in the evening. This was readily granted; it was announced in the parish school that Mr. Ouseley would preach at seven o'clock, and the children were requested to inform their parents and neighbours. In due time the rector and the preacher came to the school-house, but the door was locked, and the teacher flatly refused to open it, saying that the school received support from Erasmus Smith's Board, and it would jeopardize his salary to allow a Nonconformist to preach in the house. Dr. Stewart then taking the arm of Ouseley, said, "Come with me, and I will give you a place to preach, where no one can prevent." They walked together, followed by the congregation, to the parish church, where the missionary was handed into the pulpit, and delivered a powerful discourse, remembered to this day. The clerk of the church and some members of his family were converted, and some years afterwards entertained the Methodist ministers, when they extended their labours to the parish.*

A little chapel at Lissacaha, on the Skibbereen circuit, was opened by the Rev. William Reilly. One of those present states that there, in that humble structure, standing on a chair, the

* Lynn's Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, p. 103.

servant of God preached such an able, powerful, and eloquent sermon as he never heard before or since. And in that lowly sanctuary many a soul has been won for Christ.

The Rev. John Saul appears to have been requested to pay a visit of inspection to the mission schools in the south and west, and gives a cheering report of the results of his observation. These institutions, he says, had become increasingly successful in effecting moral and religious good. In some of the schools from sixty to one hundred chapters of the Scriptures were repeated by Roman Catholic children with astonishing precision, and the Wesleyan Catechism was well known and understood by many, while not a few had become acquainted with the Saviour, and even been the means of leading their parents to taste the sweetness of the Redeemer's love. At Dunmore the schoolmaster, a converted Romanist, notwithstanding the denunciations of the priests from the altar, visited the Roman Catholics in the neighbourhood, read, sang, and prayed with them in Irish, and gained their affectionate esteem, so that the Lord greatly blessed his labours.*

Although but few ministers at this early period identified themselves with the Temperance movement, those who did so are worthy of all honour. One of these was the Rev. Matthew Lanktree, sen., then stationed as a missionary at Bangor. He says, "When a voice from America roused us from our slumbers in this country, and turned our attention to danger and duty, I was apprehensive at first that it was a call to self-denial unwarranted by the precepts or example of our Lord, but soon found that my views were very inadequate. A deluge of intemperance had overspread the nation, and we could only stem the torrent by the most vigilant and determined perseverance in an opposite direction. I saw the tempting stimulants making such inroads on some whose interests lay near my heart as must have been ruinous if not speedily counteracted. Supposing, then, that the use of ardent spirits could not be proved unlawful, to me it must have been most inexpedient; and therefore I resolved that in my family the seducing liquid should not be tampered with, nor any encouragement to touch, taste, or handle it be derived from my example. My determination was strengthened by weighty considerations, which pressed on me as a Christian minister,

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1831, p. 135.

whose example in all things should be a living commentary on his addresses to the consciences of others. And many advantages have resulted from the firm stand which I thus made and the frequent advocacy of the subject in which I engaged." *

Mr. Joseph Payne, of the Primitive Wesleyan mission at Banbridge, states that the Lord had been graciously pouring out His Holy Spirit on that station, in a place where the people had been not only very careless, but grossly immoral. Many were turned to the Lord, and week-evening prayer-meetings were established, which were numerously attended and greatly owned of God. On Easter Sunday a new chapel in Banbridge was opened under auspicious circumstances, by the Rev. Adam Averell. The congregation was large and respectable, and the Lord assisted His aged servant in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, so that it proved a most profitable season. The collection, in addition to what had been subscribed, almost defrayed the entire cost. On the following Sabbath a Sunday-school was commenced, and there were present twenty-five teachers, with one hundred and forty-five scholars.†

On June 28th the sixteenth annual Conference of the Primitive Wesleyan Society began in Dublin, with Mr. John Stephenson as secretary. One death was reported, that of James Robinson, jun., a young man who died "in the assurance of a blissful immortality." There was a decrease in the number of members of five hundred and forty-eight, chiefly owing to emigration; one hundred and seventy, with eleven leaders, having thus been lost on one circuit alone.

The Wesleyan Conference commenced its sittings at Belfast on July 6th. The President was the Rev. George Morley, who was accompanied by the Revs. Robert Newton and John James; and the Rev. Thomas W. Doolittle was elected Secretary, an office which he continued to hold for nine years. The Revs. James Smith, James Stuart, and Robert Strong were reported as having died in the full triumph of faith. The Rev. Thomas Waugh was elected by ballot a member of the Legal Conference, in the place of the Rev. Gustavus Armstrong, superannuated; and the Rev. Alexander Sturgeon was elected by seniority, in the place of the

* Biographical Narrative, pp. 371-72.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1831, pp. 98 and 198.

Rev. James Stuart. Samuel Jones, A.B., of Dublin, William Hoey of Brookeborough, and William G. Campbell were received on trial. Although in many parts of the Connexion the year had been crowned with goodness, and on the mission-stations alone there had been an increase of two hundred members, yet owing to the loss of one thousand and twenty-seven by emigration, there was a decrease of four hundred and twenty-seven in the total membership. With regard to the condition of the country, it is stated, in the Address to the British Conference, "Through the greater part of the year, in some districts of the south and west, a spirit of insubordination, arising partially from distress, has been manifested in acts which are disgraceful to our country. Life and property have been insecure, and instances of outrage have occurred the shocking details of which must have deeply affected all lovers of peace and order. We are, however, led to trace, with grateful feelings, the providence of God, which, in the midst of dangers so imminent, has preserved the people of our charge, and even our brethren who had to traverse the disturbed districts, and have walked unhurt in the midst of surrounding peril."

The Rev. William G. Campbell was appointed to the Killashandra circuit, and entered into his work with characteristic zeal. Amongst those under his care was a young man of twenty-two, named Robert Hewitt of Castlepoles, who had been converted through the preaching of Ouseley at Corlisbrattan, about twelve years previously, and had been engaged in Christian work as a Sabbath-school teacher. Mr. Campbell appointed him to take charge of a new class he had just formed, which the youth did with great diffidence; but on his third Sunday the Lord gave him three precious souls. In a short time the class of nine members increased to twenty-five, including a converted Romanist, who subsequently became a "mother in Israel," and also a notorious cock-fighter and pugilist, to whom one of his companions said, "If you become a Methodist the devil may be one;" and yet such was his growth in grace that when the youthful leader was called to other work this man was made the leader. Thus young Hewitt entered upon a course which proved one of most remarkable and extensive usefulness.

Mr. Ouseley having regained his health, resumed his zealous and self-denying efforts. On September 6th he writes, "Hitherto

the Lord has helped me in the midst of incessant labours, for in every place the crowds run together to hear as soon as they know I am come. I generally preach from fourteen to sixteen times each week. In the county of Longford I had great congregations everywhere." By invitation of a local magistrate, the brave old missionary preached in Keenagh twice, and such numbers attended his services as had not been at the like in that town previously. He then proceeded to the county of Leitrim, and preached to an immense crowd, including many Romanists, in the street of Mohill. He also obtained the use of a large school-room, and being entertained by the rector, remained three days, conducting two or three meetings each day. Amongst others, two notable conversions took place through the Divine blessing on these services. One was a young man whom the priests offered to send, free of expense, to college and get ordained; but he refused, went to Trinity College, Dublin, and out of seventy-three candidates for entrance, took the first place. The other was a young man named Gibson M'Millen, who had been trained with reference to the Presbyterian ministry, was now engaged in the Ordnance Survey, and subsequently entered the Methodist itinerancy.

The Rev. William Hamilton was a supernumerary at Trory, on the Enniskillen circuit, where the following characteristic incident occurred: Being on familiar terms with the parish priest, he said to him one day, "Do you watch my flock, and let me watch yours, and if we find anything improper let us inform each other, and try to put it right." The priest agreed. So on a Sunday morning, as Mr. Hamilton went to meet a class, he espied one of the priest's congregation spurring a game-cock for a fight, and proceeding to his reverence, at once informed him of it, and asked if it was right. "Certainly not," replied the other. "Show me where he is." Mr. Hamilton took him to the place. "Bring out that cock," said the priest. The man did so, with fear and trembling, and the preacher held the animal while the priest cut off his head. "Now," said Mr. Hamilton, "when you find any of my people engaged in such practices just tell me, and I will take steps to prevent them!"

It is pleasing to note the first recorded instance of co-operation between the two largest Methodist Societies after the lamentable division of 1816. It occurred at Killarney, and evidently arose

from a sense of a common danger. The Secretary of the Primitive Wesleyan Missions having been prevented by sickness from visiting the town, his place was supplied by a preacher from Cork, and the Rev. William Molloy also attended the service, which was held in the court-house. A large rabble, however, took possession of the room, and not only greatly disturbed the congregation by unseemly noises, but at length proceeded to violence, throwing missiles at the preacher. In the midst of the tumult and danger, Mr. Molloy stood nobly by his brother itinerant, and closed the meeting for him with earnest prayer.*

Several attempts had been made to introduce Methodism into Whitegate, in the east of the county of Cork, but without success, owing to the opposition raised against the Society. Now, however, a Mr. and Mrs. Makeaney, from the county of Fermanagh, having settled in the village, invited the Primitive Wesleyan preachers to their house, and a little class was formed, of which Mr. Makeaney was appointed the leader. His course, however, was soon run, as in about three months he was smitten with fever and died. Mrs. Makeaney then took charge of the Sabbath-morning meeting, laboured earnestly and faithfully for Christ, and when prohibited from having services in her house, hired a room for the purpose. The rector of the parish did not approve of this, and to obviate the necessity of the preacher's visits, commenced a week-evening lecture himself in Mrs. Makeaney's house; but through her wise and consistent conduct, his prejudices were disarmed, and the cause became firmly established in the village.†

At this time Wesleyan Methodism had no position in Aughrim, but several of the respectable inhabitants desired to see services again regularly held in the town. One of these, a farmer named William Seale, offered to the Society, rent free, a commodious barn or storehouse, which he undertook, with local assistance, to fit up for a school and preaching-room. This offer was accepted, and a teacher named Frederick Pilch appointed to take charge of the school. He was a most acceptable local preacher and leader, and began at once, with great zeal and success, to work for Christ in the town and neighbourhood. One afternoon

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1831, p. 405.

† *Ibid*, 1853, pp. 372-75.

Frederick Elliott, a lad of thirteen, who resided at Glenloughaun, was told about this little man, who preached with such ability, and was asked to go and hear him in the house of Mr. Charles Wakefield of Urraghry. The youth consented, went to the service, and the word preached was accompanied with power to his heart, so that he concluded, "If there are such persons as successors of the Apostles, this is one of them," while the singing of the closing hymn, "Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing," with the chorus, "I'm bound for the kingdom," fairly captivated him. Thenceforward young Elliott was a Methodist. Pilch soon afterwards emigrated to New York, where he obtained charge of a mariners' church.*

At the expiration of his lease, Seale was deprived of his farm, and the Wesleyan premises handed over to the Established Church. He then went to live at Urraghry, and invited the preachers to his house. On going to and returning from it, the servants of God passed the residence of Edward Farrington, who had a large family. Mrs. Farrington, although a Roman Catholic, read the Bible, and one day, having read the 4th chapter of 2nd Kings, and knowing that the Methodist missionary passed her house, she said to her husband, "Might we not prepare a room, a bed, a stool, and a candlestick, and invite the man of God to turn in with us?" The proposal was promptly accepted, the preacher came to the house, and the glad tidings of salvation were proclaimed there, while the children were wont to repeat, with great delight and accuracy, to the missionary the portions of Scripture, Catechism, and hymns they had learned during the intervals between his visits.† In the course of a few years, however, this interesting family went to America.

The Rev. Elijah Hoole, who had been appointed twelve months previously Agent of the Missionary Committee in Ireland, soon after his return from the British Conference, paid a visit of inspection to the mission schools. At Dunmore he found upwards of fifty children present, most of them decent in their appearance and orderly in their behaviour, and also observed tokens of improvement and of the influence for good which had been exercised in the neighbourhood. At Lawrencetown, where

* Unpublished Autobiographical Sketch of Rev. F. Elliott.

† Unpublished Journal of Rev. G. Burrows

a chapel had been erected about two years, the school was prosperous and useful, and consisted of one hundred and thirty-six scholars, of whom more than one hundred were Roman Catholics. At Cloghan, however, where there had been one of the largest and best-conducted Methodist schools, it had to be closed, as the priest had withdrawn all the children of his people, much to the sorrow of their parents. This was done not on the ground of any disapprobation of the character or conduct of the teacher, but solely by order of the diocesan, who had issued a mandate that all children should be removed from Protestant schools.* At Carricknahorna, in addition to the Methodist meetings, a clergyman of the Established Church conducted a service in the Wesleyan school-house every Sabbath. At Ardara there was a good school, a lively society, and a congregation that more than filled the place of meeting. The school at Doorian was well attended, and though it had not been established twelve months, so highly was it esteemed that Romanists as well as Protestants freely gave many days' labour to the erection of a new building, then much required. At Magherafelt, where a chapel had been erected two years, and at Bellaghy, the masters being pious and faithful men, the schools were very efficient and much valued in their respective neighbourhoods. The school-house at Carnlough was the only Protestant place of worship in the parish where it stood, and the school itself maintained its useful character. In the twelve schools in the north visited by Mr. Hoole there were fourteen hundred and twenty-two children, of whom three hundred and sixty-nine were Roman Catholics.†

Notwithstanding all that had been effected by the Established Church and by Methodism, the condition of the masses of the people, as to education and religion, continued at a very low ebb. Long degraded by ignorance and superstition, they were the slaves of the priests of Rome and the ready tools of political agitators. For a state of things like this, while severe preventive and repressive measures of law were necessary, it was felt that more thorough education was also required; not simply the mere learning of the mechanical arts of reading and writing, but the training of the young in the great truths of morality and religion.

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1831, p. 866.
† *Ibid*, 1832, pp. 65, 66.

Earnest and successful efforts had been made for some years, more especially by the Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland, generally known as the Kildare Place Society, the leading principles of which were "the admission of pupils, uninfluenced by religious distinctions, and the reading of the Bible or Testament, without note or comment, by all who had attained a suitable proficiency." The Committee consisted of Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, and the Government, by grants of public money, aided the beneficent work of the Society. This system, however, became offensive to the Romish authorities, who did not permit their people to have the unrestricted use of the Sacred Scriptures; and to meet these objections, Mr. Stanley, Chief Secretary for Ireland, proposed that the education of the lower classes should be placed under the control of a Board appointed by the Government, and should be carried out on the principle of united secular and separate religious instruction. Thus a provision was made for the education of the masses in such a way that, while morality and religion were not neglected, there could not be even the suspicion of proselytism. To this project a storm of opposition was raised, chiefly by the clergy, Protestant and Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist; but the public in general approved of it, and in time the ecclesiastical authorities saw the serious mistake they had made, in not promptly availing themselves of an institution which has proved the means of incalculable good to the country. It is but right to add that some of the Methodists in England did not sympathize with the views of their Irish brethren on this question. In the *Magazine* an opinion is expressed favourable to the plan of the Government, "not as being all it could be wished, but all that could reasonably be hoped in the circumstances of the country."* And at the subsequent meeting of the British Conference the paragraph in relation to the Education question in the Irish Address was severely criticized by the Revs. Richard Watson and John James, but supported by the Rev. Jabez Bunting.

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1832, p. 304.

CHAPTER XIII.

1832.

In January, 1832, one of the leading members of the Society in Sligo wrote to Mr. Ouseley, giving a very cheering view of the results of a visit of the missionary to the town and of the prosperity of the cause. The writer says, "Many in this neighbourhood have much cause to be thankful to God that in His providence he led you to visit us. A great revival has taken place, and many are inquiring the way to Zion. Our parting scene at the chapel will not soon be obliterated from the memory of those who were privileged to be present, and it has been the theme of much conversation since then. Numerous hard hearts were melted under Mr. Hull's ministry on New-year's Eve. The sermon was sublime and powerful. Several have joined the Society. He is growing more energetic and useful every day, and drawing great congregations." These services were held in the old chapel at the river-side. Meanwhile a new, commodious, and substantial building was erected in Wine street, at a cost of upwards of £800, to obtain which Mr. Hull collected from door to door in the town, as well as from some of the neighbouring gentry. This house was opened by the Rev. Alexander Mackey, who drove in his gig all the way from Antrim for the purpose. The adjoining manse was built subsequently, leaving a heavy debt, which proved for some years a serious encumbrance to the circuit.

The following pleasing testimony to the success of Methodism is borne by the Rev. C. Croker, in an unpublished letter addressed to the Rev. Thomas Waugh, and dated Curryglass, January 14th: "Within the last few months the Almighty directed a most eminent and zealous person, Mr. Feckman, to these mountains. At first I thought him loud and austere, but

upon a closer acquaintance found him so sincere and valuable a worker among my poor people that I had him at my school-house as often as I could, and went with him to Kenmare. I confess that until I met him I was not aware of the close walk with God a devoted Christian may maintain, and how much below my privilege I had been living. I feel much impelled to join your Society, from a conviction that the members are the most earnest in seeking the love of God."

Mr. Ouseley made an extensive tour, in spring, through the south of Ulster. At Ballyjamesduff, as he preached in the street, a priest listened, twice visited the missionary at his lodgings, had a good deal of free and friendly conversation on religious subjects, and cordially invited him to his house. At Killashandra, in a great crowd, there was nothing but peace and good-will, satisfaction beaming on each face, and no distinction perceptible between Romanists and Protestants, while at prayer every head was uncovered. At Belturbet, where the servant of God was entertained by the High Sheriff, there was a good congregation in the police barracks, the chapel being under repair, and in the market a multitude of Catholics and Protestants listened with deep seriousness. At Enniskillen "there was a great movement among the people," about eighty souls having obtained peace with God during one week. Ouseley remained here eight days, and almost every night sinners were awakened and led to religious decision. On the market-day he preached in the street to an immense crowd, and the word was accompanied with great power; and on the day of the lovefeast the chapel could not contain the congregation, so the windows were raised, and many stood and listened outside. At Irvinestown, Ballinamallard, Maguiresbridge, Brookeborough, and Clones not only were the audiences very large, but there were blessed tokens of extensive revivals.

The Killashandra circuit, on which Messrs. James M'Cutcheon and William G. Campbell were stationed, was also favoured with a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At the March visitation of the classes a considerable number of persons were admitted on trial. One Sunday, at Corlisbrattan, the word was accompanied with unusual power, and eight persons obtained peace with God. At Carrigallen the house was filled with

persons in deep spiritual distress, and ten stood up and praised God for pardoning mercy. Thus the work spread through the circuit; scarcely a meeting was held at which there were not some either convinced of sin or converted to God. At times the services were continued all night, the distress and anxiety of the penitents being such that they would not leave without obtaining the desire of their hearts. At one meeting thirty souls were won for Christ. The leaders entered heartily into the work, the classes were greatly increased, and the public congregations became so large that the houses were too small for them.

Nor were these times of refreshing confined to the south of Ulster; in the east, on the Tanderagee circuit, to which the Revs. Edward Hazleton and John Nash had been appointed, there was a remarkable religious awakening. Nobly aided by a choice band of leaders and local preachers, the ministers set themselves to promote the salvation of souls, and their united endeavours were crowned with abundant success. The sacred fire ran quickly, and spread throughout the circuit, field-meetings and other additional services were organized, and in every part there was a gracious movement, which soon extended to the surrounding country. The result in part, so far at least as the circuit itself was concerned, was that in three years the number of members of the Society increased from 892 to 1,250. This time of power was marked by the deepening of the work of grace in the hearts of believers, as well as by an extensive ingathering.

Mr. William Pattyson was appointed by the Primitive Wesleyans to the Manorhamilton circuit; and here, although the young man assigned him as a colleague did not attend to his appointment, and thus a serious loss was sustained, the Lord poured out His Spirit abundantly in awakening and reviving power. So anxious were the people to obtain spiritual blessings that they would not leave until they received the desire of their hearts, and thus the evening services were sometimes continued nearly the whole of the night. It was estimated that not less than three hundred souls were brought to know Jesus as their Saviour, while the increase in the number of members was upwards of one hundred and fifty.

A still more remarkable and extensive work of grace took

place on the Enniskillen circuit, where Messrs. William Browne and Robert Wilson were stationed. So low was the cause that when their predecessors left the steward was £20 out of pocket, and a tax of 5*s.* per class was imposed on the Society to meet the deficiency; while at the first lovefeasts at Cosbystown and Springfield there were not more than two dozen people present. At, however, the succeeding lovefeast at Cosbystown the attendance was much larger; a backslider who had been restored to the Divine favour on the previous evening was the first to speak, and his experience was made a great blessing to others who had turned aside from the way of holiness, and several of them were restored to the joys of God's salvation. The next meeting was held at Springfield, where there was not much spiritual life apparent until near the close, when the Spirit was poured out, and many cried aloud for mercy. These indications of the Divine favour excited high expectations with regard to the lovefeast in Enniskillen, conducted by Mr. Pattyson, and these hopes were more than realized. The attendance was very large, the people spoke with great freedom and power, and the service was turned into a prayer-meeting, during which sixteen souls were won for Christ. At its close Mr. Pattyson said to his brethren, "I tell you, for your encouragement, there is a cloud of blessing hanging over your circuit, and it is designed by God to refresh the whole community." These words were almost prophetic, for the good work continued to deepen and spread, and a glorious harvest was reaped. No available house could contain the congregations that assembled to hear the word preached, so frequently two adjoining buildings were used simultaneously, and when the weather permitted it, meetings were held in the open air. Funds increased so rapidly that not only all deficiencies were paid, but large sums were available for the erection of new chapels. About fifteen hundred persons are said to have been savingly converted. And so marked a change took place in the conduct of the people that the annual races, which had been attended by vast crowds, were patronized by very few, and intemperance seems to have ceased. One of those converted was James Irwin of Springfield. Some of the worst men in the country were arrested and turned to the Lord. One of these having been convinced of sin, was so powerfully

affected that he appeared to have lost his reason. His great importunity in seeking a present pardon led some one to say, "Don't set God a time;" but he replied, "I will," and cried aloud, "Lord, Thou hast said that in the day I seek Thee with my whole heart Thou wilt be found; here is my heart." That moment he received a conscious sense of sins forgiven, his countenance beamed with holy joy, and he went home praising and blessing God.

Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord were also vouchsafed to other circuits, including Cavan, especially at Ballyconnell and Newtownbutler, Clones, where Thomas Foster was converted, Maguiresbridge, Ballyshannon, and Charlemont. Mr. William Taylor of Lisbellaw writes, "I am greatly delighted in seeing the Lord has once more visited this barren part of His vineyard; upwards of two hundred and forty souls have been converted to God." And again, "I have seen the wonderful work of the Lord in converting, at my house and other places, hundreds of souls, including at least fifteen of my Sunday-school children." This success led to the erection of a preaching-house, in completing which Mr. Taylor took a very active part. He also built, convenient to this place of worship, a dwelling-house for himself, in which the servants of God were hospitably entertained.* Nor was the south of Ireland left unwatered and unblest. In Dublin an unusual unction accompanied the word preached, special prayer-meetings were held, and souls were converted; at Cork a gracious revival took place, and was productive of blessed results; while at Mallow, within a few weeks, about twenty persons found redemption in Christ, and others were led to realize the all-cleansing power of the Saviour's blood.

There were on this side of the Channel three denominations of Methodists—the Wesleyan, the Primitive Wesleyan, and the New Connexion; but now a fourth, the Primitive Methodists, entered the country. The Shrewsbury circuit sent the Rev. Mr. Haslam, the first missionary of this body, to Ireland, and he made Belfast and its vicinity the sphere of his operations. He commenced his labours on Sunday, April 8th, by preaching twice in the open air in Smithfield. Some disturbance took place at the services, but this was stopped by the authorities. In the course of a few days a room was hired in Rea's court, where services were regularly

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, p. 399.

held and a society was formed, until a dispute having arisen with the authorities in England, Mr. Haslam resigned, and joined the New Connexion. However, the work was continued, more especially by means of camp-meetings and other open-air services, which proved attractive, on account of the intense earnestness of the preachers, the lively tunes sung, and the hearty sympathy of the worshippers. A few weeks after a minister had thus been sent to the north, the Preston Brook circuit sent another to the south. The Rev. F. N. Jersey arrived in Dublin; but upon conversing with some friends there, on the propriety of holding open-air services, he judged it inexpedient to make the attempt, and therefore left for the north, making Newry the centre of a field of labour embracing Banbridge, Loughbrickland, and Dromore. The Divine blessing rested so signally on his efforts that at the following Conference he reported eighty-six members. A few months after the opening of the Belfast and Newry missions a missionary was sent to Lisburn, and he extended his labours to many places in the neighbourhood, in which small societies were formed and encouraging prospects of success appeared.

Dr. Clarke paid his last visit to Ireland, arriving at Donaghadee on May 18th, and on the following Sabbath preached there to a large and deeply attentive congregation. He also occupied the pulpit at Newtownards, where there was a crowded house; but severe indisposition having set in, he was confined to his room, and prevented from making the excursions through the country he had intended. However, having in some measure rallied, he visited and preached in Belfast and Coleraine. Of the latter he writes, "I used to praise the Coleraine Society as one of the most Methodistical in all our Connexion; but that generation has passed away, and there is scarcely son or daughter left to light the lamp of the Lord or to keep watch in the city by night. Order and discipline are now wanting. Preaching does not commence till eight o'clock in the evening. Want of method and order in Ireland is like the withering blast of the desert; it ruins every green thing." Matters, however, soon began to improve, and to this improvement the learned doctor himself contributed not a little. His visits to the town and his great personal influence had done much to raise the character and increase the power of Methodism. In addition to this, some rotten branches were cut

off, which gave life and strength to the parent stock, so that the Society, though not numerous, was sound and good. On June 21st Dr. Clarke bade a last farewell to the land of his nativity.

On June 27th the seventeenth annual Conference of the Primitive Wesleyans commenced its sittings, and Mr. John Mallin was elected Secretary. George Robinson of Newtownbutler, who had been called out as a supply during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months; and James Harvey of Belfast, John Carlisle of the Antrim mission, and Richard J. Dawson were admitted on trial. Robert Parsons, a young man of promising talents and deep devotion, was reported as having passed to the Church triumphant. The increase in the number of members amounted to nearly two thousand, although more than four hundred had been lost by emigration. The subject of the new system of National Education having been brought under the consideration of the Conference, a resolution strongly disapproving of it was passed unanimously, and it was resolved that a petition to that effect should be presented to each of the Houses of Parliament.

The Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on July 5th, under the presidency of the Rev. George Marsden, who was accompanied by the Revs. Theophilus Lessey and John Beecham. The Rev. Thomas W. Doolittle was elected a member of the Legal Conference, in place of the Rev. James Bell, superannuated. Benjamin Bayly and Henry Geddis were received on trial. Three of the brethren had been removed by death during the year. They were the venerable Gustavus Armstrong, the devoted John Foster, and the youthful and promising Thomas Nesbitt; and all died well. Although no less than six hundred and eighty members had been lost by emigration, after filling up all vacancies, there appeared an increase of four hundred and twenty-nine. The missions at Kenmare and Lecale appear especially to have prospered, while there was an increase of three hundred in the scholars attending the daily schools. A considerable number of these children were the subjects of religious impressions, and a large proportion of them were the children of Roman Catholic parents. Resolutions expressing the necessity of sound religious instruction, and condemning the National system, were adopted.

Ireland was now visited by that fearful scourge Asiatic cholera.

For some months previous public attention had been aroused by its rapid march, and as it swept westward and northward, fastening upon cities in constant communication with British ports, the hope that our sea-girt position would form a sufficient defence was abandoned, and the people tremblingly awaited a calamity they could not evade. Maps were published to exhibit the track it had travelled, and the time of its arrival was accelerated by the terror which prevailed. The cities and large towns were in general ill prepared for such a destroyer, as the inhabitants had been insensible to the peril of dwelling together in thousands in utter neglect of everything sanitary. Drains and sewers were insufficient, and where they did exist common gratings in crowded thoroughfares gave ready ascent to noisome gases and foul smells. The rich were careless of their poorer fellows who dwelt close by, and the poor, in their ignorance, invited disease by squalor and filthiness, which, fatal to themselves, preyed too on those above them. Water, so bountifully given, was unattainable where most needed, and wretched tenements, overcrowded and stifling lanes, blind alleys, and impure yards were left undrained, to breed and foster contagion. During the sittings of the Conference the cholera spread its ravages throughout the metropolis, as well as other parts of Ireland, and carried off its victims by the thousand, until there was scarcely a town or village unvisited by this terrible scourge. Dublin, Drogheda, and Sligo were almost decimated. The preachers and leaders of the Methodist Societies were most faithful and fearless in their efforts to minister to both the bodily and spiritual wants of the sick and the dying.

One of the first victims in Cork was John Downey, a member of the Society. He was not unprepared for the dread summons. A sermon on the Prodigal Son, preached long before by the Rev. William Reilly, had brought him to his Father's house, and John well remembered that day. In following years he was again favoured to hear the same subject treated by the same Christian herald, and on leaving the chapel said, with lively gratitude, to a fellow-worshipper, "Did you hear my sermon a-preaching?" He was a native of the north of Ireland, and as foreman moulder in a local foundry had earned the respect of those who knew him. On Friday evening, April 27th, he attended a meeting for prayer in Henry street chapel, little thinking that his labours

were ended, and that prayer would soon be lost in endless praise. That night he was seized with cholera, and removed to a hospital. Mr. Field was soon at his bed-side, and found him "happy in the Lord." He died triumphing in His love. A few days after the death of this servant of God a whole family, consisting of a widowed mother, two sons, and a daughter, were all taken to the hospital. Mr. Field hastened to see them, and found the mother and younger son dead, while a young woman who had met in his class died subsequently in holy triumph. Six hospitals were opened in the city, and it was estimated that no less than five thousand persons died.*

At Stonyford, in the county of Kilkenny, while the people were dying in large numbers, a committee was appointed to consider what was best to be done under the circumstances, and it resolved to send to Wexford for a Methodist minister to visit the town. The Rev. James Tobias promptly responded to the call, rode some forty miles for that purpose, and remained for three weeks visiting the sick and the dying; and thus many were led to the Saviour, and Methodism obtained a permanent footing in the place.

At Westport the exertions of Mr. James White and Mr. Larminie were remarkable; while many fled from the scene of desolation and woe, they visited the hospitals and houses of the sick, day and night, attending to their wants, and telling them of the Great Physician, and even placing in their coffins the remains of those whose own relations had abandoned them. In Sligo, where nearly all the local doctors fell victims to the distemper, the Rev. Robert Masaroon and Mr. George Leech visited the patients, gave them medicines, and used every means in their power to alleviate their agonies and, if possible, prolong their lives.

In some instances this awful visitation proved a means of much spiritual good. From his first circuit the Rev. Benjamin Bayly writes, "On July 28th I came to Monaghan, where the cholera had made its appearance and summoned some to the bar of God. The people were greatly alarmed, and like others, 'poured out a prayer when His chastening hand was upon them.' Yet some have reason to bless God that He sent them the rod; many have been stirred up, and some have been converted. Our

* A Devout Soldier, pp. 131–34.

congregations are large and our societies many in number, but there are rarely more than twenty members in any one class." Although the country about Sidaire was mercifully preserved from this terrible scourge, a most profound and salutary impression was made on the minds of the people. At a prayer-meeting held one Sabbath evening a cry for mercy arose, two persons obtained peace in believing, and thus a good work commenced which continued and spread until no farm-house in the neighbourhood could contain the anxious inquirers, and the chapel at Ballinamallard was too small to accommodate those who attended the prayer-meetings. Hundreds were led to the Saviour, and at one service no less than sixty found the pardoning mercy of God.

At Donaghadee, where many died, deep religious concern pervaded the community; the ministers and leaders fearlessly did their duty, and whenever they called to pray in a family a crowd followed to unite with them at the throne of grace. Two new classes were formed, and galleries had to be erected in the Wesleyan chapel to afford accommodation for the increased congregations. At Downpatrick Mr. Edward Addy availed himself of the serious feeling excited to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come; the Primitive preaching-house was crowded, and many were awakened to religious concern and led to the Saviour. Mr. Addy also conducted several out-door services in the grove where the venerated Wesley had so often preached. One of these occasions especially was memorable, as all business was suspended, the greater part of the inhabitants of the town, including the Protestant ministers, were present, and all seemed to give earnest heed to the things which they heard, and to join devoutly in prayer and supplication. This fearful scourge was the means of arousing James Donald of Hillhall to anxiety about his soul, so that during a subsequent conversation with his uncle, Mr. Robert Thompson of Lisburn, he was enabled to believe with a heart unto righteousness. Twelve months later his brother John, at class-meeting, obtained like precious faith, and thus entered upon a career of great and extensive usefulness.

Although many of the Methodists died from cholera, only two of the ministers fell its victims—one a Wesleyan, and the other a Primitive Wesleyan. On October 17th the Rev. Robert Bailey of the Banagher and Galway mission was seized by this terrible

disease, and in fifteen hours closed his mortal career. While the malady rapidly gained on him he was asked how he did, and replied, "It is all over, but all is well." Mr. John Mallin of the Charlemont circuit was seized by the distemper on the evening of Christmas Day, died early on the following morning, and a couple of hours later his remains were laid in the silent grave. It was the day of the quarterly lovefeast, and hundreds assembled from all the surrounding country to attend the service, and learned, to their great sorrow, that their beloved preacher had, in the prime of life and zenith of his usefulness, been called hence.

The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry was appointed to Bandon, with the Rev. Frederick P. Le Maitre as his colleague, and his first impressions were most favourable. He says, "Our chapel is by far the most beautiful in Ireland. Our lodgings are neat and well-furnished. The stewards, leaders, and their wives seem all disposed to make their preachers comfortable. I wish there were many like them in every circuit. We have about two hundred and fifty in society in the town, one hundred and eighty in the Sunday-school, one hundred and twenty boys and girls in the day-school, and sixty in the infant-school. Henry Cornwall, Esq., principally supports the day-school. He is a truly pious man, and useful wherever he goes. Thank God, there is no cholera here now, and we hope it may not return. Two of our leaders in Skibbereen, men whom I knew and loved nine years ago, have lately fallen by it. They finished well." The devastating malady, however, did return, and found Mr. Tackaberry's mind, as to himself, calm and undismayed. He writes, "September 25th. We have cholera in this town, in Kinsale and Clonakilty. Not very many are dying. My gracious Lord visits and waters my soul. I hope to see good days. Indeed, the present are good. I thank God I never feel anything concerning cholera except an ardent breathing that I may be found ready for anything and everything. If Heaven permitted, I should be as well pleased to die of cholera as of any other disease." A month later he says, "Since I came to Bandon I have been inquiring concerning everything, have taken down the names of every class in my pocket-book, have held leaders' and Society meetings in every place, and am feeling my way as I proceed. Up to this my grand aim has been to

excite a hungering and thirsting after righteousness among our own people, to arouse the leaders to an exact attention to their classes and the local preachers to their appointments, and, thank God, not in vain. Our congregations in most places are doubled. At our lovefeast here one of the leaders said, in his experience, that he had not seen the Society in a more hopeful state for years. We have had a little reviving all round, but I have not heard of more than one, since I came, receiving a clear sense of pardon. I commenced two Sunday-schools last month, from which I expect much good, and hope to commence more. I have also begun a meeting for young persons, every Friday evening, from which I look for fruit, and occasionally we have children's sermons. I have divided the town into districts, and hope regularly to visit every Methodist in Bandon during my fortnight in town."

This was the second year of the Rev. Robert Huston on the Carlow circuit. The previous twelve months had proved a time of tearful and anxious sowing. His lodgings were in the gaol, in a room of the governor's house, kindly placed at the service of the Society. The difficulty of egress at times, the sight of chains and grated windows, and the hollow, doleful sounds of the opening and closing of the prison doors no doubt largely account for the unutterable depression of the youthful preacher, and his mental conflicts during the year. Invited to remain a second term, he consented on condition that he would be taken out of gaol, so he obtained the privilege of a prophet's chamber under the kind and hospitable roof of Mr. Henry Banks. The second year was one of joyful reaping. At Hacketstown the chapel was usually crowded with eager hearers, waiting the arrival of the preacher. Here William Saul Jones, an intelligent, cultured, and influential gentleman, was awakened to a sense of his sinfulness. At one prayer-meeting nine penitents, who were seeking mercy, believed and praised a pardoning God, at the same moment. Fourteen persons professed conversion one night at a prayer-meeting in Gurteen. The glorious Lord made Carlow chapel also, on more occasions than one, a place of broad rivers and streams. This was especially the case at the September lovefeast. During the meeting a brother prayed with much simplicity and fervour, "that the

devil might not muzzle" them, and the homely petition was answered. Three persons professed to have received a clear sense of sins forgiven. One of these was Mr. W. S. Jones; and on the following Wednesday he came again to the town, nearly twelve miles, to say that he was made happy in God's pardoning love on the previous Sabbath. Thenceforward he became one of the chief supporters of the cause on the circuit, until his removal to Dublin, where for years he sustained the offices of leader and local preacher with much acceptance and usefulness. Eminently spiritual, zealous, and laborious, his one aim appears to have been to win souls for Christ; and God greatly honoured him, not only in conducting religious services, organizing classes and house-to-house visitation, but also at the close of life, when "an entrance was ministered to him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The revival spread to Athy, where amongst those converted to God were Edward Martin Banks, son of the Rev. Robert Banks, and John Duncan, who subsequently entered the itinerancy.

The good work also soon extended beyond the limits of the circuit. A son of Mr. Moses Rowe of Wexford, having been engaged at business in Athy, and greatly blessed there, on returning home, went from house to house, especially among the young men of the Society, describing the glorious scenes he had witnessed. A spirit of earnest desire and strong faith was thus excited, the Lord poured out His Spirit, and meetings were held night after night, during which scores of persons were led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross. In connection with this revival there was raised up a noble band of zealous and devoted young men, including Robert J. Meyer, who had been converted about twelve months previously; Thomas and Matthew Rowe; Nathaniel Pidgeon, who subsequently became a city missionary in Sydney; John Clarke, who entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, America; and a number of others. These godly youths laboured in all the surrounding country, often walking from twenty to thirty miles on the Sabbath to hold religious services, and thus enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The following incident with regard to the family of Nathaniel Pidgeon is worthy of notice: His father, mother, and three

sisters had resided at a place called Ringwood, where they were visited by James Bolger, a rough but intensely earnest evangelist, who went from house to house, wherever he could obtain access, warning sinners of their danger and urging them to flee from the wrath to come. Dick Pidgeon was thus brought into deep distress about his soul, and in time obtained redemption through the blood of Christ. Now his superior industry and care seemed more than ever balked and blighted. His cattle and fowl died, his crops failed, and financial ruin seemed inevitable. Methodism was charged with having brought all this evil on him, and many who should have helped the poor man endeavoured to obstruct and overthrow him. The homestead, with all its pleasant associations, had to be abandoned; and want and woe were depicted on the face of each member of the family as, with hardly a remnant of household stuff, they left for Wexford. Had it not been for faith and hope, the distress would have been overwhelming; but the daughters had not only cast in their lot with the despised Methodists, but were sharers of the peace of them that believe. Employment, however, was soon obtained by the father, then by the eldest daughter, and Nathaniel having completed his apprenticeship, was also able to render help; so their temporal circumstances greatly improved, until at length, in their neat, well-furnished residence, they had the joy of entertaining the servants of God. Thus was fulfilled the cheering assurance of James Bolger, "Be faithful, Dick, and the Lord will deliver you."

About twelve months previous to this period Dr. J. M. Lynn was appointed to the Markethill dispensary. He had previously been connected with Methodism, as his parents were members of the Society, and on coming to the town he found the cause very low, there being no members or regular services. Now, however, the Rev. John Holmes and his colleague on the Armagh circuit, Samuel Jones, A.B., visited Markethill, secured an untenanted house, and there proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. After repeated visits, they formed a class, of which Dr. Lynn was one of the first members, and eventually the leader. From that time forward, notwithstanding strong opposition, the Society continued to increase in number and influence. Not far from the town there lived a farmer, who by attending the Methodist services

became convinced of sin, and was recommended to meet in class. Accordingly, he went for a few weeks, until one Sunday morning he felt hope springing up in his heart. But when, on returning home, he saw his geese in the corn-field, trampling down the crop and destroying the grain, he seized a rod, ran at them in a rage, and drove them out. Then, indignant with himself for having given way to passion, he exclaimed, "It's impossible for a man to be a Methodist and keep geese"! *

The gracious and extensive revival which had commenced in the north early in the year, through the Divine blessing on the labour of the Primitive Wesleyans, continued its progress. On September 25th Mr. William Browne writes, from Enniskillen, "The Lord is still carrying on His gracious work of convincing and converting sinners. Not a week, I believe I might venture to say not a day, but we have fresh instances of this. Our houses are crowded to excess every night, and numbers stand outside to hear the word of life. We have many openings which we cannot fill, but are endeavouring to supply them by mid-day services. On the 17th instant we held our quarterly meeting at Enniskillen, and as the cholera had visited the town, feared that our country friends would not attend, and the meeting would be a small one; but to our astonishment, the house could not contain the congregation at the public services, and at the lovefeast it was completely filled. Similar meetings were held in the course of the week at Derrygonnelly, Springfield, and Skea, and at each of these it was delightful to see the rapid progress the young converts had made in the Divine life. Some of the oldest Methodists say they were never present at such meetings before. I think that not less than one hundred members have joined our Society on this circuit since the Conference."

Mr. William Pattyson of the Manorhamilton circuit says, "It is evident that a mighty change has been wrought in the public mind; our congregations are everywhere increased, prayer-meetings are held almost every day, at 6 o'clock a.m. and at 7 p.m., and all give evidence of the presence of the Lord to bless and revive His work." Nearly one hundred members were added to the Society during the September quarter. At Cavan eight new classes were formed, and at the quarterly lovefeast about eighty

* Lynn's History of Methodism in Armagh, pp. 87, 88.

persons were made partakers of the Divine favour. At Clones the cause was blessed with much and continuous prosperity. Year after year a considerable number of persons were received into the Society, so that the membership rose from 938 in 1829 to 1382 in 1833. Amongst others converted was a daughter of James Fitzgerald, Esq. This young lady, afterwards Mrs. Richey of Lakeview, not only took a decided stand for Christ, but also for Methodism, which grieved and alarmed some members of the family. Her brother Francis, however, remonstrated with his mother on the opposition she had given her daughter, and affirmed his conviction that she was right, while they were wrong. Another daughter, subsequently Mrs. Tate, was then led to the Saviour, and through her godly influence Francis was pricked in his heart, and at length enabled to receive and rest on the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, thus entering on a career of protracted and extensive usefulness.

The northern portion of the Tanderagee circuit, about Derryanvil and Scotchstreet was also favoured with a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the preachers, Messrs. Richard and George Robinson, entered heartily into the work, so that about three hundred members were added to the Society.

CHAPTER XIV.

1833.

Mr. Tackaberry's hopes of prosperity in Bandon were not immediately realized, in consequence of the disturbed state of the country, occasioned by the Whitefoot combination. In the town, when the services were after dark, the men came to the chapel armed; and in the country many were afraid to attend public worship at all. On January 4th the servant of God writes, "The parlour in which I now sit has three broken panes, the Whitefeet having dashed in the windows last night, and left a notice for the master, coffined and inscribed, 'Departed this life, February 9th, 1833.' Two other houses where we stop in this neighbourhood were also attacked last night, and the gates torn up. The whole of the country is proclaimed, and the magistrates are afraid to do their duty. Matters are daily becoming worse. My colleague sometimes carries a pistol. I have not, nor do I intend. You may think from all this that Fossey's mind is greatly excited. It is not. God protects. He can save as easily now as at any other time, and if He chooses to permit, I would just as willingly be killed as die by gentler means." In the midst of these alarms, God vouchsafed some encouraging tokens. "I have held," says Mr. Tackaberry, "one or two penitent meetings lately, and when I think the time for them is come I shall have more. A few obtained pardon, and but a few. Two have experienced purity of heart lately in Bandon, and others are all athirst for it." The revival thus begun soon spread; and it may be traced, instrumentally, not merely to ministerial devotedness and zeal, but to the harmony and united action of the office-bearers. Of this the devoted evangelist speaks with feelings of lively satisfaction and hope: "Our prospects brighten; the congregations are visibly on the increase.

One person was converted on Sunday week, another on Wednesday. There may have been more, if I knew them; and in this large Society, where there are several aged leaders, we have not one jarring string." On May 15th he writes, "A member of my class, sister to one of our preachers, was converted on Monday night, while I was preaching. On Sunday evening the feeling through the congregation was general." Again, June 17th, "Yesterday was a very happy day. My cup ran over. In the lovefeast it was difficult for me to restrain my feelings." Thus closed his first year in Bandon.

At Skibbereen, the old chapel having become too strait for the increasing congregations, a new building, suited to the number and circumstances of the hearers, was erected, chiefly through the self-denying and earnest efforts of the circuit ministers, the Revs. Thomas Ballard and John Saul. The Lord testified His acceptance of the temple raised for His service, and there were many of whom it has been truly said, "This and that man were born there."

About this period an attempt was made in Dublin to take the life of Mr. Ouseley. It appears that a gentleman who resided in the north of the city invited the Methodist ministers to preach in an open space in front of his house. Mr. Hull was the first to engage in this work, and his colleagues followed in succession. For some time the services were held without interruption, but at length a gentleman who lived in the neighbourhood took offence and endeavoured to stop them. One day Mr. Ouseley happened to have charge of the meeting, and was in the act of preaching, when a villain, armed with a hatchet, came behind him, and aimed a deadly blow at his head; but providentially, a friend seized the fellow's arm, and thus frustrated his wicked purpose. He was committed to custody, but Ouseley refused to prosecute him.

At this time a youth of fourteen, named Joseph William M'Kay, was converted to God, and thus entered upon a career of distinguished usefulness. His father had been in the army, and was one of a noble band of devout soldiers, including James Carnegie, afterwards of Northesk, near Cork, James Horne, so long a missionary in the West Indies, Robert Milne, who entered the ministry of the Church of England and obtained a charge in London, Alexander Ross, who settled in Dublin, and James

Mackey, subsequently of Armagh—all companions in arms and in the service of Jesus Christ, as members of the Methodist Society. Mr. M'Kay, sen., had a comfortable situation in Carrickmacross, where the early boyhood of his son was spent, and where he attended the endowed school, and read a considerable part of the entrance course for Trinity College; but a change in his father's circumstances, which served to implant in the youth an abiding abhorrence of Romish rule, led to his entering business with his uncle, William Wallis of Parsonstown. Mr. M'Kay, sen., accompanied his son to Dublin, where the latter took ill with symptoms of cholera, which proved the means of leading him to resolve that should his life be spared, it should be devoted to the service of God. This resolution the youth faithfully kept, and on reaching his destination joined his uncle's class, and after several months' earnest seeking, was enabled to realize peace and joy in believing. He owed much subsequently to the character, example, and instruction of this uncle, who, though perhaps he went to an extreme in some peculiarities, was a man of rare consistency as a Protestant and a Methodist. He was esteemed as an honest man by the people, but was disliked by the priests and those who worked with them behind the scenes, and what is now called boycotting was brought to bear upon his business, which led to his selling out and emigrating to the United States. Thither it is probable Mr. M'Kay would also have gone, had not an accident so disabled him that he was obliged to return home, and thus Providence secured to Irish Methodism one of her most able and eloquent ministers.

After the death of Dr. Clarke, his family and executors, anxious that the six schools he had established should be permanently attached to the Wesleyan Connexion, offered to place them under the control of the Missionary Committee, and to pay the surplus of the fund for their support. On examination, it was felt that although the effective management of these schools would involve the Society in a yearly expense of about £150, it was due to the memory of their illustrious founder to sustain them, and therefore the offer was promptly accepted. The Rev. Elijah Hoole paid them a visit of inspection, and found them in a highly satisfactory and encouraging state of efficiency, affording instruction to upwards of six hundred children.

On April 5th Mr. M'Clure of the New Connexion writes that the places which he had visited fortnightly during the previous nine months were Saintfield, Ballynahinch, and a Mr. Kearns', who resided between the above towns and Belfast. When first the preacher went to Saintfield there were scarcely any who would attend the services, and three or four met in class when they could obtain the assistance of a leader in the Wesleyan Society; but in time the attendance greatly improved, and many who heard the truth preached were greatly affected. At Ballynahinch the Society had been scattered and the meetings badly attended, through neglect; but now, when better worked, the congregations increased so that they could with difficulty be accommodated. Some who had been in the habit of swearing, drinking, and Sabbath-breaking confessed with shame their guilt, and evinced their sincerity by a complete change of conduct. One lad in particular publicly led in prayer, to the astonishment of all present, and at home got his brothers and sisters together for reading and prayer, so that both his father and mother became deeply impressed with the truth, and attended the preaching services regularly. At Mr. Kearns' also there had been but few hearers at first, but the people soon came out better, so that the apartment in which the services were held could hardly accommodate them, and they appeared to devour "the bread of life."

During spring the following marked interposition of Providence took place: Mr. M'Clure had a preaching appointment in the neighbourhood of Ballynahinch, and on one occasion, when the usual day of meeting arrived, he was unable to obtain a seat in the public conveyance, another vehicle could not be obtained, and he fell back on the offer of a friend to lend him a pony—a wild, young animal that there was great difficulty in catching, and that managed to escape from the hands of his captors until it was too late for the preacher to get to his place in time for the service. On arriving there a fortnight later, he expected many upbraidings for his apparent neglect, but was surprised on being received with unwonted warmth. It appeared that an unusually large congregation had assembled, the kind hostess had tea waiting, and the leader, with several of the members, were in the sitting-room; but as no preacher appeared, they all went into the large kitchen where the people were sitting, when suddenly the roof of the

room just vacated fell in with a crash, smashing every article of furniture into fragments. Had not the Lord prevented His servant from reaching the house, he and at least six others would most certainly have been killed.

Mr. Heather, of the Primitive Wesleyans, had now been two years stationed in Belfast, where his labours were greatly owned of God. The congregations became so large that additional accommodation had to be provided by enlarging the chapel, many souls were converted to God, and the Society was increased from a membership of three hundred and seventy-five to six hundred and twenty-two.

The seventeenth annual Conference of the Primitive Wesleyan Society commenced its sittings on June 26th, with Mr. John Buttle as secretary. James Armstrong of the Maguiresbridge circuit, and Thomas Wilson of the Charlemont circuit, were admitted on trial. The increase in the number of members in the previous year, as has been stated, was nearly two thousand; but at this Conference it exceeded even that number. In the Pastoral Address it is said, "On many of our circuits and missions the Spirit of grace and supplication has been poured out in no ordinary measure, so that the gracious result is an increase of two thousand one hundred and seventy-six members." The Address proceeds, "The state of the missions is such as to demand our thanksgiving to God. Several of our stations have enjoyed great prosperity, and have become established fields of labour; and the funds raised for this department of our work are supported with an activity and zeal highly creditable to the Christian generosity of our members and our friends generally." Arrangements were made at the Conference for the employment of suitable persons as Scripture-readers and missionary schoolmasters, and the plan adopted prove the means of much good.

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Cork, and commenced on July 4th, under the presidency of the Rev. Robert Newton, who was to have been accompanied by the Revs. Dr. Adam Clarke and John James; but owing to their removal by death, their places were supplied by the Revs. Jabez Bunting and Theophilus Lessey. The Rev. Charles Mayne was elected by seniority a member of the Legal Conference, in place of the Rev. Thomas Ridgeway, superannuated, and the Rev. William Reilly was elected

by ballot instead of John Stuart, who had fallen a victim to strong drink. Jeremiah Wilson of Ballyjamesduff and Samuel Cowdy, who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months, and John Foster of Lisnawery and James Murdock were admitted on trial. Three deaths were reported—those of James M'Keown, Robert Bailey, and Matthew Lanktree, jun. Notwithstanding a loss of three hundred and twenty-two members by emigration, great distress occasioned by cholera, and much political agitation, there was an increase in the membership of more than fifteen hundred, no less than seven hundred of those recognised as in the Society having been previously Roman Catholics. In the Pastoral Address, written by the Rev. Henry Deery, it is said, "We behold with unspeakable satisfaction our Societies growing in unity and godly love, and acquiring such an increasing stability and attachment to the doctrines and discipline of Methodism as encourage us to anticipate still greater blessings to attend the faithful ministrations of the word." The Rev. John Nelson was appointed secretary of the Chapel Fund Committee, an office which he sustained for nearly thirty years.

At the British Conference a little incident occurred which led to additional and permanent financial assistance being granted to Ireland. The Rev. William Reilly had been deputed to attend, and at the close was preparing to leave, when Mr. Bunting pressed him to remain until after the meeting of the Committee of Distribution, adding, "If there be a slice to spare, we will add it to the Irish grant." There was a sum of £50 available; it was added to the previous annual grant of £600, and continued each year until 1878, when the whole grant was raised to £800.

At the New Connexion Conference Mr. M'Clure was appointed to Lisburn. In his account of the first quarterly meeting he says there were twenty leaders present, by whom the warmest Christian affection, as well as desire to promote the good cause, was manifested, while the financial condition of the circuit looked more encouraging than it had done for a considerable time previously. The congregations also were in general larger, and there was an increase in the membership, with the prospect of further additions. The circuit then included Broomhedge, Ballin-

derry, Ballyskeagh, Priesthill, Moyrusk, Englishtown, Moira, and Halftown, as well as Lisburn. On December 5th there is the first notice of those abundant labours in the cause of Temperance which gave such honour and efficiency to the ministry of Mr. M'Clure. He says that after a great deal of running to and fro, he obtained the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Thompson, curate of Lisburn, and the Rev. Edward Leslie, Rector of Dromore, at a meeting for the purpose of forming a Temperance Society in Broomhedge. Mr. Logan also assisted. The meeting was well attended, a good spirit pervaded the mind of each speaker, and forty-two names were enrolled as members. A committee of six, with power to add to their number, was chosen, and agreed to meet for the purpose of maintaining discipline and securing the assistance of different ministers in the neighbourhood.

The Rev. John Armstrong was appointed to Newtownlimavady, where a new chapel had been erected about three years previously. However, the cause was very low. He writes, "I have spent one month here, and such a mission I never travelled. We have hardly six regular classes, and the Methodists are cold, lifeless, and, as they say themselves, moneyless. It is like a ship that has passed through a great storm and is nearly a wreck. Yet there is a little spark that may become a flame." And through the Divine blessing on earnest, faithful labour, so it proved. In time the missionary could write about good congregations, full houses, lively lovefeasts, and a common determination to "spend and be spent in the service of the Lord."

At Youghal a neat and commodious chapel and a residence were erected, under the direction of the Rev. James Sullivan. The former was opened on July 7th, by the Rev. Theophilus Lessey, who preached exceedingly eloquent and impressive sermons to large and respectable congregations. The collections amounted to nearly £28, and a recognition of the liberality of the members of the Society and other inhabitants of the town and its vicinity is gratefully recorded.

At Markethill, on October 7th, the curate of the parish and Dr. Lynn organized the first Temperance Society in the county of Armagh, and it became a great blessing to many, including subsequently upwards of eleven hundred persons on its roll of

memberships. A valuable addition to the Society in the town took place in Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Archer, both pious and devoted Methodists. Mrs. Archer had been baptized by Mr. Wesley, who preached in her father's house, in the vicinity of Armagh. This godly couple had two daughters who had excellent voices and were well versed in Methodist hymnology. One of these young women afterwards was married to a Mr. Fullerton, and two of their sons are now in the Methodist ministry, Alexander in this country, and James in the United States, while a third, Thomas, is a local preacher in Belfast. Thomas Archer had also a son, John, who retired from the army in 1849, settled in Markethill, hung up his sword, and consecrated his services to the Lord, rendering protracted and valuable service to the good cause.*

After Conference, Mr. Ouseley set out for Killarney, where a new chapel had recently been erected, and where he preached in the street, some listening attentively, and others yelling loudly. He then discoursed indoors, and the next morning "both out and in," and sent a short letter in Latin to the Roman Catholic bishop, enclosing copies of his reply to a challenge of Father Tom Maguire and his letter to the Hon. and Rev. George Spencer, a pervert to Romanism. Having spent three days in Tralee, preaching both in the open air and in the chapel every day, the veteran evangelist proceeded to Limerick, and on the journey a priest sat next to him on the mail car. They conversed freely on the tenets of the Church of Rome, and although Ouseley exposed the sophistries used in their support, "the priest cleaved to him as a brother." Nothing, however, surprised this ecclesiastic more than the missionary's speaking in Irish to the beggars that flocked about the car. "I declare," said he, "you appear to know everything." During a fortnight, which Ouseley remained on the Limerick circuit, he preached in the streets and chapels not less than forty-seven times. "August 7th," he says, "I preached to a full congregation, and took my leave of them. We had a blessed season. This was the sixth sermon, in and out, that day."

Mr. Ouseley was most wishful for the employment of Scripture-readers, and, in a letter to the Rev. Theophilus Lessey, begs

* Lynn's Methodism in the Armagh Circuit, pp. 88, 115-16.

that he will lend a helping hand to "good and kind Mr. Bunting," in procuring the sanction and aid of the Missionary Committee. This was at length obtained, and the following announcement appeared on the December Missionary Notice: "The friends of Ireland will be glad to learn that the Committee has determined to strengthen the mission in that country. Some time since, the Rev. Gideon Ouseley having strongly advised the employing of a limited number of Scripture-teachers, generously offering to contribute £50 towards defraying the expense, and the Irish Conference having earnestly recommended the speedy adoption of the measure, the Committee has resolved to engage, at a moderate salary, ten pious persons, whose business will be to visit those places which the missionaries can only occasionally reach, and instruct the people out of the Scriptures in the first principles of religion." This system was continued in efficient operation for some time, until at length the mission schools having been increased, and the teachers generally having acted as local preachers, this was considered sufficient to meet the case, and better suited to the circumstances of the country.

An interesting view of Methodism in Dublin at this period has been given by a Christian lady who then resided in the city. Abbey street was the chapel for the *élite* of the Society, and the only one in which the liturgy was read. In Whitefriar street there was no service in Church hours, the sacraments were not administered, and the congregations were made up chiefly of old-fashioned Methodists, who sat, the men on one side, and the women on the other. Methodist preaching was much less artificial than it is now, the most that any preacher wrote being a mere skeleton of his sermon, if he did even that, while such things as pulpit notes were unknown. The habits of the people were most social. Frequent dinner or evening parties were given, at which the presence of at least one of the ministers was deemed indispensable, and the conversation was always general, and on subjects that were "good for the use of edifying." Thus one evening at the Slackes', when some one said, "This is like a class-meeting," Mr. Hull replied, "I was just thinking of asking each one to tell when and how he or she was converted to God," began at once with an account of his own religious experience, and then the others followed in succession. One gentleman, whose wife was

a Methodist, said, "It's wonderful what a dreadful fellow I am, with all the good preaching and conversation I hear." This was his experience. Such parties, of course, never broke up without reading and prayer. At the time of Conference or the visits of the English Missionary Deputation breakfast-parties used to go the round, and thus all the principal friends had opportunities of meeting the strangers in a social way. There were also Dorcas meetings held in private houses, in rotation, once a month, to provide clothing for the poor. One lady said, "They were just an excuse for an evening party, and served to bring together persons not previously acquainted." Whatever preachers were disengaged were there of course, and generally one or two young men, by invitation, to read to the ladies. It sometimes happened that by this means a young man obtained an acquaintance he coveted, and thus more than one matrimonial alliance was due to the Dorcas meetings. The *modus* of these parties was tea first, then needlework, with reading, singing, and conversation, and finally prayer. The Rev. William Ferguson was a "standing dish" in more senses than one. He was always present, and in general conversation formally stood up and expressed his opinion, however briefly.

The Revs. Thomas Waugh, William Reilly, Thomas T. N. Hull, and Robert Huston were the ministers of the one circuit of which the metropolis consisted. Mr. Waugh was in his zenith. Judicious and firm in rule, wise in council, able in administration, earnest and persuasive in the pulpit, and ready and powerful on the platform, he won the respect and confidence of all with whom he came into contact. Both in the Conference and out of it, people voluntarily and instinctively deferred to his judgment and feared his rebuke. It was not that he assumed authority on personal or official grounds, but he had a remarkably quick perception of what ought and what ought not to be, with great power in making this seen and felt by those he dealt with. At the same time, he was very tender-hearted toward those who desired to do right, though less acute than himself in their judgment. His preaching was eminently practical, and abounded in rousing appeals to the conscience. He had an intense hatred of Popery, was what he called "deep blue" in politics, and once at least said that he was a loyal man when there were a Protestant king and government, but

cared for none of them now that the Emancipation Act had passed. On one occasion he visited the family of a captain, whom he found half-seas over, and addressed to him some words of reproof. "Will you pray for me?" said the poor sinner, trembling under the force of the rebuke he had received. "Yes, I will," replied the servant of God, with no diminution of sternness in his tone. "But will you do it now?" inquired the captain. Down Mr. Waugh dropped upon his knees and said, "Lord, convince this man that he will be damned, body and soul, for ever, if he does not give up drinking. For Christ's sake. Amen." People are sometimes exhorted to pray "short and to the point." Surely here was a specimen!

Mr. Reilly was at the height of his popularity, and preached with an impassioned and impetuous eloquence that won for him the designation "the Kirwan of the Irish Conference." At times, however, it was said of him that there was an apparent restraint in the larger chapels, while in the smaller buildings he discoursed with overwhelming freedom and success. In social intercourse his cheerful piety, ready wit, genial manner, and buoyant spirits rendered him specially attractive, yet never led him for a moment to lose his balance or seemingly to forget himself. He had a habit of ejaculating words of prayer and praise in an undertone, not intended for listeners, and thus it sometimes happened that before the company had ceased laughing at some ready reply or humorous incident, they heard him whispering to himself, "The Lord be praised, there's another and a better world," or some similar expression. One day at dinner, at the Heneys', Mr. Smith remarked that there was a verse of one of our hymns which he could not rightly understand—

> "Oh, may I learn the art
> With meekness to reprove,
> To hate the sin with all my heart,
> But still the sinner love!"

He could not, he said, comprehend how we could hate the sin with all our heart, without feeling some aversion to the sinner. This led to an interesting and animated discussion, which had not concluded when Mr. Reilly was called away, to make a sick call. Being an unexpectedly long time absent, Mrs. Reilly became uneasy and anxious about him; and therefore on his

return some one said, "Aha, my lad, you'll catch it now. See the state in which you left your wife all this time!" "Yes," he promptly replied, "she only—

"Hates the sin with all her heart,
But still the sinner loves!"

Mr. Hull was also very popular, his able pulpit ministrations and pastoral fidelity being greatly appreciated. He says, "There was a fact in the social system prevalent then which occasioned and stimulated social gatherings more than at present. All the Methodists resided in the city, and lived at their places of business; whilst now all who can have their country or suburban residences, and thus become more isolated and, like their houses, detached." In comparing the Methodism of Dublin at this period with that of the present time, it should also be observed, as noticed by Mr. Hull, that although there were nearly thirteen hundred members in the city, the salary of each of the two married ministers was only £100, and that of each of the two single preachers was only £50; and such was the difficulty in making up this amount that it was a serious question, discussed at the quarterly meeting, whether the Society could afford to support four ministers. Now there are on the same ground at least fourteen preachers, most of whom receive from £130 to £180 per annum, and there are no indications of a wish to reduce the ministerial staff.

"Mr. Huston was," as Mr. Tackaberry expressed it, "one of the sweetest spirits that ever the Lord created." His earnest love for souls was manifested not only or even chiefly in his public ministrations, but in dealing privately with individuals, whether saints or sinners. His readiness and faithfulness in this were most remarkable, and he appeared to have an aptitude for discerning, as by intuition, the state of the soul after looking into the face for a few moments. His *naiveté* was charming, and often disarmed Mr. Waugh in his strict adherence to regularities. Mr. Huston's favourite chapel was Gravel walk, where there was more than ordinary liberty for out-of-the-way proceedings. These were greatly facilitated by the plain, earnest, unceremonious spirit of William Haughton, who was bound by no conventionalities when any work for God was to be done. One Sunday

morning, after the close of the sermon, he jumped on a seat and said, "Friends, I'm sure some of you have felt the word to be a nail in a sure place, and if you'll just come into the vestry we'll clinch it for you." On another Sabbath, Mr. Huston remained so long dealing with awakened souls that he was not in his place in Abbey street, at noon, to lead the responses, for which of course he was taken severely to task by Mr. Waugh, who read the prayers. "There was so much good doing at Gravel walk," said the young preacher, "that I could not think of leaving." "But we ought to do good in the path of duty," sternly answered the superintendent: "what should I have done if Mr. Hamilton had not happened to come into the chapel in time to take your place?" "Oh, the Lord would have helped you through, for my sake!" rejoined Mr. Huston, with a look of such perfect simplicity that Mr. Waugh's facial muscles relaxed in spite of himself.

The venerable William Smith was a supernumerary in the city, and was almost quite blind; but his saintly spirit appeared to be ripening for a better world. As he could not distinguish any one by sight, he was grieved if even the youngest child who entered the room where he was did not go and speak to him. On one occasion, two young ladies having visited him, they found the old man full of gratitude for recovery from a recent illness, yet dwelling much on the time when he should depart, and then suddenly he broke out with—

"Our souls are in His mighty hand,
And He will keep them still;
And you and I shall surely stand
With Him on Zion's hill."

When the visitors rose to leave he took a hand of each, and said, with great solemnity, "If thou seek Him He will be found of thee, but if thou forsake Him He will cast thee off for ever." Then, after a pause, "And what I say to one I say to all, Watch." His aged wife was very lame. Mr. Waugh said, "That old couple should slip away to heaven within half an hour of each other, for she could not walk without his support, or he without her guidance."

The Rev. Charles Mayne was also a supernumerary in the city.

He was a perfect gentleman and a ready wit. On one occasion, in a stage-coach, two of his fellow-travellers were freely interlarding their conversation with By this and By that, as was then only too common amongst those who should have known better. At length, when an opportunity was afforded, Mr. Mayne said, "Gentlemen, I have a favour to ask. Will you allow me to say the next oath?" Of course there was no more swearing.

Amongst those led to the Saviour through the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. Huston was John Cathcart, familiarly known as "Happy John," once an abandoned drunkard, but subsequently for many years a most zealous, devoted, and successful leader, albeit not a little peculiar. "I had a good birth," he said at a lovefeast, "out of hell, and I got good rearing under that man of God William Haughton." His prayer in Cork street chapel during the session of the Council at Rome, that the Lord might send "a blessed disagreement" among the members, was certainly answered. The Rev. James Hughes preached one morning in Gravel walk chapel, on Abraham's Sacrifice, as an illustration of spiritual worship, showed how it may be marred by unbelief and worldly-mindedness, like the offering by the vultures driven away by the patriarch, and then called on Happy John to pray. "Glory be to God," exclaimed the leader, as he addressed the throne of grace, "if the birds come down, we can say, Chu! chu!" Towards the close of his career this devoted man said, "It is now forty years since I was converted, and, bless the Lord, I never had a quarrel with God or a preacher from that day to this."

There were in the Society several elderly members, rich in anecdotes of a still earlier age. Old Mr. Holbrook of Cullenswood was amongst these, and one of his stories was of a Sunday-morning prayer-meeting, in the county of Mayo, at which a recent convert was asked to pray. On his protesting that he could not, for he did not know how, he was told to pray as if he were alone. So he began with a particular confession of his own besetting sins, craving mercy for the past and grace for the future, and then proceeded, "And here, Lord, is John ——, a very good man, but when he goes to the fair he is apt to get more drink than is enough." Having prayed what he thought necessary on this subject, he went on "Here's Jane —— and Mary ——; Lord

grant that when they meet together they may be talkin' o' the love of Jasus, and not gossiping about their neighbours." This proved a very effectual prayer, for it got wind, and as sure as these women were seen together somebody would say, "Mind you be talkin' o' the love of Jasus, and not gossiping about your neighbours," or simply "Mind Bill ——'s prayer for ye." Of the officials of the Society in Dublin Mr. Hull says, "In my judgment we had at this time a body of intelligent and effective officers such as has never been exceeded since, if ever equalled."

CHAPTER XV.

1834.

On January 10th, 1834, Mr. Field writes, "I went to Bandon. Next day that man of God Mr. Feckman arrived. He has been made very useful. I visited many of my old friends. Met a class on Sabbath morning—had a powerful time. At twelve o'clock prayer-meeting, and at half-past four o'clock the house could scarce contain the people. The Lord was present. After preaching we had another prayer-meeting." "27th. Again in Bandon, with fear and trembling. I greatly dreaded that the people would look to and expect too much from me—evil results from this. I warned them of the danger. We escaped. That evening we had a prayer-meeting. The Lord was with us. Next day I visited from house to house. Found the people alive to Divine things, ready to do or be what the Lord requires." "28th. At six o'clock (evening) a large tea-meeting. Mr. Tackaberry announced that I would give some directions respecting class-meeting—how talents were to be employed, particularly with respect to the present revival. This was an undertaking indeed, and what I had never done before. Had not time to think of what I should say, and to stand up before three preachers, six local preachers, and old stewards and leaders was too great a burden. In the strength of grace I embarked in the work, and my kind Master helped me. Mr. Price 'took up all my fallen stitches,' for I dropped several. We had a delightful meeting, and I hope some ventured on Jesus for a full salvation." "29th. After evening preaching, a prayer-meeting until near ten o'clock, and again in the evening of the 30th and 31st, when a multitude attended. During the day I visited from house to house, and not a day did my gracious Master suffer me to labour in vain. There has been no noise, disorder, or the least con-

fusion. God's presence was powerfully manifested. The classes are increasing in light and love."

On the same day Mr. Tackaberry writes, "We see good doing now everywhere we turn;" then, referring to the character of the work, adds that he never saw a revival go on so quietly; there was no noise, no bustle, no confusion, but a heavenly influence, which was "as the dew unto Israel." As the result of the March visitation of the classes, it was found that the Society in Bandon had increased from two hundred and seventy-eight members to three hundred and seventy-six. Amongst those converted during this blessed awakening, we find a son of Sylvanus Robinson, named William, Eliza Shine, subsequently Mrs. Thomas Hunter, Margaret Hunter, afterwards Mrs. Thomas Clear, and one of her sisters, all of whom, having faithfully served God and Methodism for upwards of fifty years, still live, and adorn "the doctrine of God our Saviour." To these must be added the named Thomas G. Bennett,* who entered the ministry of the Established Church, and William Welply of Bengour.

The Rev. Robert Trail, a grand-nephew of Mrs. Henrietta Gayer, was rector of Skull, and being an ultra-Calvinist, notwithstanding his connection with one of the most saintly of Methodists, commenced a gratuitous and unprovoked assault on the Society. In his lectures from the pulpit and his visits from house to house he asserted that Methodism had led the souls of many of his parishioners to endless ruin, that the Methodist preachers taught the way to hell, and that the preaching-houses were synagogues of Satan. The Rev. Thomas Ballard, the superintendent of the circuit, on being informed of this, felt that he had no alternative but either tamely to submit to a tempest of defamation or to raise his voice in defence of the people and doctrines which had been so violently and openly assailed. Feeling the latter to be his duty, he called upon the rector to substantiate his charges, and the challenge was at once accepted. Mr. Trail affected to despise his opponent, but in Mr. Ballard he found "a foeman worthy of his steel." The rector vauntingly declared, that he would "put down Methodism and silence the Methodist preacher." The itinerant trustfully said, "I have no fear for the cause I espouse —'truth is mighty'—and although I regret the matter has not

* A grand-nephew of Thomas Bennett. *Vide* i., p. 274.

fallen into better hands, I pledge myself, trusting in the Lord, that I will not shrink from meeting Mr. Trail on any platform." It was decided that the discussion should take place in the parish church; that each disputant should nominate a chairman; and that each should speak for twenty minutes alternately, so long as the debate continued. Mr. Trail selected as his chairman his curate, the Rev. William F. O'Neill; and Mr. Ballard selected Mr. James H. Swanton.

At the appointed time the church was crowded in every part. Mr. Trail estimated that there were between six and seven hundred persons present, though one inspecting the ruins of the old church, as they are to be seen to-day, would find it difficult to imagine how so many could be crammed within the space. Evidently the people pressed closely one upon another. Through the windows many eyes peered, and large numbers standing on graves or headstones listened with eager attention. One who was present said, "The church was full inside and out."

Mr. Trail opened the discussion, and reiterated the offensive charge against Methodist teachers and preachers—that "they were," by teaching the doctrines he referred to, "leading the people to hell." Mr. Ballard, in reply, asserted that Mr. Trail must have misunderstood and had misinterpreted Wesleyan teaching, and stated the views held by Methodists, supporting them by numerous appeals to the Word of God and the Prayer Book. These statements were met by mere assertions, declamations, and denunciations. But Mr. Ballard pressed his arguments home upon his opponent with such telling force, that Mr. Trail demanded that the discussion should be continued for another day, which was agreed to. At this second debate Mr. Trail dropped the original question in dispute, turned to that of unconditional election and reprobation, and was again defeated, claiming another opportunity of maintaining his views. This was attended with similar results, for he left the church unmistakably crestfallen, while Mr. Ballard received the warm congratulations of many of those present. Some years later, Mr. Whitley, one of those old Methodists against whom Mr. Trail had spoken so hardly, lay a-dying, and was visited by the rector, who conversed with him upon his religious state, and heard the glorious testimony he bore to the power of Christ to save, and to his

implicit trust in Him as his only and all-sufficient Saviour. Mr. now Dr. Trail was delighted at what he witnessed, and from that moment his views in reference to Methodism changed. He attended the funeral, took the arm of the Methodist minister who was about to officiate at the grave, and requested that he would grant him the privilege of addressing the people assembled, which was at once conceded. Dr. Trail then said he was glad to have the opportunity of removing an erroneous impression which in years past he had made on the minds of many in reference to the Methodists. He did so because he had had his own mind disabused by the visits he had paid to the sick and dying bed of him whose remains lay before them. He narrated what he had seen and heard during those visits, and expressed the wish that when God should see fit to call him away he too might die as he had seen that servant of God end his days. From this time forward Dr. Trail proved to be an Evangelical preacher, a faithful pastor, and a warm friend of Methodism.*

On the New Ross mission of the Primitive Wesleyan Society a very blessed awakening took place, through the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. William Scott. On February 17th he states that at New Ross upwards of eighty persons had been converted to God, including in some instances whole families, while at Enniscorthy more than half that number had obtained peace through believing. The labours of the young converts, male and female, were greatly acknowledged in extending the good work, and the congregations were so much increased that at New Ross the court-house in which the services were held could not accommodate those who desired to attend. On April 30th Mr. Scott writes, "Since the beginning of the revival on this mission more than one hundred and fifty persons have found peace with God. One Roman Catholic has been converted, and meets in class, and another appears to be earnestly seeking salvation. I am by no means able to attend to all the invitations I receive to preach to the people."

Messrs. Edward Addy and Thomas Boyce of the Primitive Wesleyan Society write that they had secured an opening in Newcastle, in the county of Down, having obtained the use of a school-room for the services, collected a large congregation, and

* *The Christian Advocate*, 1887, pp. 418 430.

formed a class; Dromore had also been visited by them with encouraging tokens of success, although no cause was established. At Markethill both the Episcopal and Presbyterian clergy afforded much encouragement and assistance. Through the influence of the former a site was secured and some funds were raised for the erection of a chapel; while by the kindness of the latter the meeting-house was lent to the preacher until the intended erection should be completed.

The Rev. Elijah Hoole, having completed one of his tours of inspection, made the following cheering report: "I think we never had more Catholic children in our schools than at present; about six hundred attend the daily schools, and none are more diligent or successful in committing Scripture and our excellent Catechisms to memory. In the conducting of the schools and apportioning of the tasks the masters are instructed to observe no difference on the ground of religion; and almost every fact that comes to my knowledge confirms the opinion that no objection to Scriptural education exists in the minds of the people; if any is made, it is on the part of the priests." *

The success of the Temperance movement far exceeded the expectations of those who had started it. Early in 1833 upwards of one hundred and fifty societies, including 15,000 members, existed in Ulster alone. The practice of abstinence from distilled spirits only, however, did not satisfy many of the friends of the cause; for they saw plainly that to arrest the progress of intemperance, the use of all intoxicating drinks should be given up. Hence the origin of total abstinence. The first regularly organized teetotal society in Ireland was formed at Strabane in June, 1834. Some of the Temperance reformers objected strongly to this step in advance; and one of them, when he heard of it, exclaimed, "When the devil can't upset the coach he mounts the box, seizes the reins, and drives to destruction." Of those who took a leading part in this noble work, no one is worthy of more honour than the Hon. Judge Crampton, first President of the Hibernian Temperance Society. Even when Solicitor General he was wont, with an upturned beer-barrel for a chair, to deliver Temperance addresses in the Tailors' hall, Back lane, Dublin. In 1831 he attended the first annual meeting of the

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1834, p. 227.

British and Foreign Temperance Society, held in Exeter Hall, and explained with admirable tact and skill the principles of the movement. When elevated to the Bench some of his friends feared that he would deem it inconsistent with his position to appear before the public as a Temperance advocate; but all doubts were speedily set at rest by the Judge. In reply to an inquiry from Dr. Edgar, he answered, "You ask how my new station will affect the Temperance cause. It will not, be assured, abate my zeal in furthering that good work in which I had the pleasure of being a brother missionary with the worthy Tobias and yourself. I cannot, perhaps, repeat such a circuit with my Temperance associates as that to which I allude, and upon which I always look back with pleasure; but I trust to find both time and opportunity for aiding the progress of the Temperance reformation." Although Judge Crampton was not a member of the Methodist Society, he was a regular hearer, had a pew in Abbey street chapel, and even when out on circuit found his way to the Methodist services. He continued devotedly attached to abstinence principles until his death in 1863.

The following is an account of the experience of Mrs. Crampton in regard to perfect love, as given in a letter from her to the Rev. William Stewart: "Mrs. Stewart kindly called on me in Cork, and gave me a copy of The Experience of Mrs. H. A. Rogers. I found it deeply interesting, particularly the account of her obtaining entire sanctification, and thought, 'Were I to kneel now before God, and to plead with Him in her words, perhaps I too might obtain the blessing.' I did so, but found it not. At different times I read over this part of her experience, and spoke of it to others; until one evening, soon afterwards, the Lord gave me faith to see that Christ was able to save to the uttermost. I felt that the blessing was obtained simply by believing and trusting His all-sufficiency, and that though I felt I was bankrupt of all good and power in myself, His omnipotence was engaged for me. I felt satisfied, nay, happy, to think I was nothing, when I knew He was All and in all. Many passages of Scripture were brought to my mind in which I saw a new and deeper meaning; such as 'The Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' 'The government shall be upon His shoulder,' 'Ye are complete in Him,' etc. I now saw I had hitherto been robbing God of His glory. I had

believed, indeed, that He had saved me from past sins, but not that He saved me from present corruptions. I believed His blood could cleanse from much sin, but not from all. I am not aware of the moment when faith came in my mind; but this I feel, so sure am I that this glorious doctrine is the truth of God that it appears to me the Spirit witnessed of it as of adoption."

The Revs. William Douglas and William Finlay were stationed on the Irvinestown circuit, where there was an extensive religious awakening. From an unpublished journal of one of the leaders and local preachers, it appears that from August, 1833, until June, 1834, not fewer than four hundred and thirty-five souls were converted, while the net addition to the Society amounted to two hundred and ten.*

The reports furnished by the missionaries were encouraging. At Kenmare it is stated that several Romanists regularly attended the public services; scarcely one was held at which some were not present, and more would have been there but for the influence of the priests, who imposed heavy penances on all whom they discovered transgressing thus. From Moate the Rev. James Olliffe writes, "The Lord has blessed us. Congregations are good, and include many Romanists." The Rev. Edward Cobain of Cavan says, "At our quarterly lovefeasts and in the celebration of the Lord's Supper we have had very gracious times. Our new chapel in Bailieborough is nearly ready to be opened; great interest has been excited in reference to it, and several friends there who are not members of our Society have been zealously and generously co-operating with our people in carrying on this important work." On the Newtownlimavady mission the Rev. John Armstrong held a series of field-meetings, which were made a means of much blessing. "It was truly affecting," he states, "to see men, women, and children bathed in tears, as they cried for mercy, and to hear many praising God for His favour." In the town of Newtownlimavady the good work continued for eight weeks, during which services were held every day, at least once, sometimes twice or thrice. Some of the most careless and prayerless persons in the neighbourhood were led to attend, and decided for God. So marked was the moral change that many were constrained to say, "God has done great things for these people." The last quarterly

* *The Irish Evangelist*, 1876, p. 142.

lovefeast of the year in Garvagh was very largely attended; the house was crowded to excess, and numbers had to remain standing outside; while at the close about fifty penitents knelt down together, to plead for Heaven's mercy. The Rev. Robert H. Lindsay, who was appointed to the barony of Lecale, reports that the Societies in Ardglass, which had been formed only two years, and Sheepland were in a very prosperous state, so much so that arrangements were made for the erection of a chapel in the former, the lord of the soil having given a site rent free, and also a good subscription, while liberal assistance was rendered by many others in the town and neighbourhood.*

The members of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference assembled in Dublin on June 25th, and Mr. Alexander Stewart was elected Secretary. It was reported that Mr. Thomas Pearce had died in the faith and hope of the Gospel. John G. Wakeham of the Youghal mission and John Glass of the Maguiresbridge circuit were admitted on trial. The increase in the number of members was two hundred and forty-five, making a total of seventeen thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, the largest number ever reported to this Conference. With regard to Temperance societies it was agreed, "We approve of the principles of such societies, and resolve that individually and in our public capacity as preachers of the Gospel we will use our best efforts to discountenance the use of ardent spirits, according to the Rules of our venerable Founder." The subject of tract distribution also came under notice; and as in the course of the preceding year a society with this object in view had been organized in Dublin under most encouraging circumstances, others were earnestly recommended to follow the example thus set, by forming similar associations.

The members of the Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on July 3rd, under the presidency of the Rev. Richard Treffry, supported by the Revs. Robert Newton and John Beecham. Four preachers were reported as having died during the previous year, two of whom, Messrs. William M'Cornock and James Sterling, had been supernumeraries for some years, and the other two, Messrs. Samuel Harpur and Joseph Edgerton, had passed away in the midst of their usefulness. Thomas Beamish, who had been called out during the year, was received as having

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1834, pp. 12—19.

travelled twelve months; and seven candidates were admitted on trial. These were John B. Bennett, M.D., of the Bandon circuit, William A. Darby of the Youghal mission, John Liddy, a converted Romanist, and Armstrong Halliday from Belfast, William P. Appelbe, Henry J. Giles, and Edward M. Banks. Notwithstanding considerable mortality amongst the members, and a loss by emigration of seven hundred and eighty-one, there was an increase of one thousand two hundred and eleven. The British Conference having resolved to commence a Theological Institution for the improvement of junior ministers, the Irish Conference expressed its approval of the project, agreed to place at the disposal of the Committee a legacy of £1,000, left by Mr. Abraham Mason for that purpose, and thus became "entitled to have four students constantly at the Institution when required, and an additional number on the payment of a reasonable annual charge." This Institution was subsequently established at Hoxton, London.

In the Answer of the British Conference to the Irish Address the following pleasing testimony is borne to the success of the work in Ireland: "Our brethren who were deputed to attend your missionary anniversaries have taken knowledge of you that, wisely considering the peculiar state of society in your interesting country, the preachers of your Connexion are endeavouring, without irritating controversy, to explain and enforce the essential truths of the Gospel, and that this plan of operation is practically pursued with great prudence and patience and with the most beneficial and gratifying effects. They have observed with joy the missionary spirit, the improving finances, the cordial co-operation, the spirituality and self-denial, the well-principled fidelity, and the indefatigable labours of our Irish brethren; and while they acknowledge the propriety and utility of reciprocal deputations to preserve and cultivate the Christian amity of the two Connexions, they also bear testimony to your ample sufficiency of native talent for all needful advocacy of the claims and objects of Wesleyan missions."

The venerable Ouseley, now in his seventy-third year, still persevering with unabated zeal in his loved work, visited, amongst many other places, Parsonstown, where a glimpse is afforded of his labours. The rector of the parish took considerable interest

in this visit, and invited several ministers to meet the evangelist in the glebe. There was at the time an Evangelical movement in the Church, but it was much marred by the Calvinism that was mixed up with the religious teaching. Mr. Ouseley preached to large congregations in the Methodist chapel every evening during his stay. On one occasion, when some seven clergymen were present, he, in his sermon, supposed the Lord to address a young Calvinist, just entering the ministry, in the language of the great commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" and then himself accosting the young clergyman who had been so personally addressed, he inquired, "What would you say, child? what would you say? Would you hesitatingly say, 'Yes, Lord, but I don't believe that doctrine?'" On another occasion a young man named John B. Hackett, who was altogether thoughtless and unconcerned about his soul, went with some like-minded companions to hear the missionary. Before entering the chapel, they had been indulging in some frivolous mirth, and young Hackett had got into such an immoderate fit of laughter that decency would not permit him to enter for some minutes. He was that evening convinced of sin, joined the Society immediately afterwards, endured some opposition from his relatives, but held fast faith and a good conscience, and continued for nearly fifty years a consistent and influential Methodist.

The Rev. John Holmes was appointed to the Castlebar circuit, where the Lord greatly owned his labour, especially in Westport. Here members of nearly every Protestant family in the town and vicinity attended the services in the Methodist chapel, and a large number of young people were converted to God. Robert Black, a zealous local preacher, was very useful amongst the anxious inquirers and young converts. He was then studying in preparation for the ministry, with a view to which he had come with Mr. Holmes from Armagh, and now lived at Castlebar. Mr. Samuel Larminie also gave assistance at the meetings, and sometimes preached in the Wesleyan chapel. Amongst those awakened to a sense of their sinful state, and enabled to believe on the Saviour, mainly through the Divine blessing on the preaching of Mr. Holmes, was a lad whose subsequent illustrious career as a missionary, public speaker, and author has placed him in the

first rank of Methodist preachers. William Arthur was born at Kells, in the county of Antrim, on February 3rd, 1819. His father having removed to Newport, he entered into business with Mr. George Woods in Westport. It also appears that he attended an Episcopal Sunday-school at Newport, where he was in the class of the rector. When this clergyman heard of the revival, and that many had become Wesleyans, he said, "Ah, there is one lad there who is too wise a bird to be caught with Methodist chaff!" But a few days later he learned with astonishment that his *protége*, William Arthur, had also joined the Methodists, and thus entered on a course which proved of world-wide usefulness. The death of the wife of the Mr. Woods mentioned above is noteworthy. One day a number of Christian friends spent the evening with her, during the course of which some hymns were sung. Mrs. Woods said she would like them to sing the hymn beginning "Give me the wings of faith" etc., and while they were in the act of doing so she leaned back on the sofa on which she sat, and died. No doubt to her sudden death was sudden glory.

The Revs. Samuel Downing and Edward M. Banks were appointed to the Ballina circuit. Here, at the September lovefeast, the Holy Spirit was powerfully present, and at the close a number of young people came forward in much distress, sought salvation, found it, and went home rejoicing. This work went on for several months, and spread to various parts of the circuit. The Rev. John Holmes was invited from Castlebar to attend the December lovefeast, which began at ten o'clock, the house being packed. Testimonies were freely given, even little children telling of the love of Christ. At the prayer-meeting there were a large number anxious. It was five o'clock when the meeting broke up. Evening service commenced an hour later, and on that day about thirty professed to find pardon.

A very extensive religious awakening took place also at Hyde Park, having commenced under noteworthy circumstances. Two daughters of Mr. David Nesbitt, one of the leaders, and two daughters of a Mrs. Caruth having met in band, whilst uniting in prayer, were enabled to receive and rest on Christ as their Saviour. On the following morning they again met at the throne of grace, and then told Mrs. Caruth what the Lord had done for their souls. She did not rest until she also had found the Saviour. On her

sons coming home for breakfast, they were spoken to and joined the praying band. One of these, John, obtained peace that day, and thus entered upon a protracted course of usefulness, especially in connection with the Donegal square chapel, Belfast. Public meetings were arranged for, many of which continued the greater part of the night, and thus the good work deepened and spread. Benjamin Bayly having been appointed as a missionary to this district of country, his efforts were crowned with abundant blessing. The stories which are told of his labours would be incredible were it not that he had a physical constitution of extraordinary strength and endurance. As an evangelist he was "a flame of fire." He sometimes held six services in one day, and often continued with seekers of salvation the greater part of the night.

At Ballynure there resided a Mr. Robert Beatty, two of whose brothers, some years previously, had gone to the West Indies, and there, through the preaching of the Wesleyan missionaries, were converted. One of these, Alexander, in the autumn of 1832 returned on a visit to the old homestead, and the marked change in his spirit and conduct so deeply impressed his brother Robert that he resolved to "cease to do evil, and learn to do well." Alexander Beatty went to the Methodist services, and took with him any members of the family he could induce to go. Robert went to the cottage meetings, and in 1833, on the Sunday after his brother returned to America, joined the Society, and thus entered upon a long career of usefulness. His mother's house then became a home for the preachers; the change wrought in the family attracted much attention in the neighbourhood, and the people assembled in large numbers to attend the services. Night after night meetings were held. Mrs. Beatty delighted to invite those who came to them from a distance to partake of her hospitality; and though the accommodation was large, the number was often so great that it was necessary that one group after another should gather round her board. When it was announced that Mr. Bayly would preach in her fields crowds flocked to listen. The revival thus spread in this direction, and three well-attended classes were formed. Throughout the whole of the mission the rebound from the narrow, frigid, and formal Calvinism then so prevalent to all the warmth of Evangelical Arminianism was very marked. Many farm-houses were opened for class-meetings and

other religious services, and bands of men, all aglow with zeal and love, traversed the country each Sabbath, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation. The neighbourhood was taken possession of for Christ, and such numbers were converted that at the end of the year two hundred and forty were returned as members of the Society.

Methodism had a footing in Crumlin as early as 1777, when the preachers appear to have been entertained by a Mr. Moses Davidson; but evidently owing to either the death or removal of their host, the work died out. A second attempt to establish a cause was made in 1826, by the Rev. George M'Elwain, who preached there to large congregations, but having no house open for his reception, this effort was abandoned. The third attempt proved more successful. In this instance Mr. George Chapman Creevy was the honoured instrument. He was a son of Mr. James Creevy * of Moira, and was a man of fine appearance, with a good voice, and an excellent local preacher. Having married a daughter of Mr. Henry Sinclair,† he came to reside at Crosshill, and engaged heartily in work for Christ, travelling all through the surrounding country to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. Amongst other places, he visited Crumlin, obtained the use of a room in the house of a Mrs. M'Ilroy, and thus her two sons Daniel and William were led to Christ. Both of these subsequently removed to Belfast, became identified with the Frederick street Society, and for many years were among its most earnest and successful leaders. Mr. G. C. Creevy eventually emigrated to America, where he entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Messrs. William Browne, John Thompson, and William Fleming were appointed by the Primitive Wesleyan Conference to Maguiresbridge, and there did a noble work both with regard to the chapel property on the circuit and the salvation of souls. A preaching-house at Lisnaskea was built, those at Maguiresbridge, Fivemiletown, Irvinestown, Trillick, and Togherdoo were repaired and much improved, and at the end of the year upwards of two thousand three hundred members were returned, being an increase on the previous return.

For several years the Primitive Wesleyan Society in Dublin

* *Vide* ii., pp. 241-43.

† *Ibid*, p. 270.

felt the need of a preaching-house for the accommodation of poor Protestants in the Liberty, and also the lack of some provision for the benefit of aged widows for whom shelter could not be obtained in any existing asylum. At length, however, Providence opened the way for supplying both of these wants, as a large store and dwelling-house in Brown street became available and were secured, the former for a chapel, and the latter for an almshouse, with accommodation for at least ten widows. The preaching-house was set apart for the worship of God on Sunday, 28th December, when Mr. W. C. Rice preached an appropriate sermon from Isaiah ii. 2. The congregation was large, and the collection amounted to £15. This was the twelfth Methodist chapel in the metropolis.

CHAPTER XVI.

1835.

On January 10th, 1835, Mr. M'Clure writes that his labours had been unusually severe, owing to the bad state of the roads and the flooding of the river Lagan; but God had given a blessing in connection with his work. He had seen the drunkard reformed, heard swearers pray, and known the careless awakened, the stubborn convinced, and the followers of Christ comforted and established, which had put songs of joy in his heart when in the mire and dark he plodded to and from his appointments. The congregations in the country chapels were not so large during the severe weather; but in Lisburn they were much improved, owing chiefly to a tract society which had been formed in the town by Mr. Haslam. The audiences in private houses also were very good, when the people could venture out without being drenched by rain.*

Early in the year death removed to the Church triumphant one who had been in fellowship with the Methodists for seventy years, sixty-eight of which he was a leader. William Black of Lisburn was a man of rare excellence and worth—poor in his circumstances, but cheerful as a lark; a garret his earthly residence, but heaven his eternal home; at ninety years of age glowing with the zeal and fire of youth; bent with the load of years, but never absent from the means of grace. His silvery locks, furrowed cheeks, weeping eyes, and joyful tones, as he leaned on his staff and spoke of his hope of glory, could not fail to arrest attention and impress the mind. He seemed a stranger to doubts and fears, and equally so to murmurings and complaints, with a smile for every one, and a good word for his Master in every conversation. Oh, how he loved Methodism! and how

* Memoir of the Rev. W. M'Clure, pp. 105-6.

lovingly he exemplified its earnestness, simple faith, devotedness, and usefulness! He used to pray for ministers thus: "O Lord, bless Thine ambassadors; save them from sinister motives; may the salvation of souls be their object; go with them into the highways and hedges; make them Thine instruments in the conversion of thousands, and those thousands of ten thousands, and those again of millions, till the whole earth be filled with Thy glory." His death was one of holy joy and triumph. The venerable saint when just entering the dark valley exclaimed, "Heaven is mine; angels beckon me away, and Jesus bids me come."

On the Lisburn circuit an extensive religious awakening took place, more especially in the neighbourhood of Ballynacoy, through the Divine blessing on the labour of the Rev. William Bickerdike, a minister of the Primitive Methodists. Such crowds attended the services that no house available could accommodate them, therefore many of the meetings were held in the open air, and scores of persons were converted to God. Mr. John Collier, although a Wesleyan, invited the preacher to his house, and was cheered by seeing led to the Saviour several of his children, including his son James, then a young man of seventeen. One evening before service he went into the garden and prayed earnestly that if there were anything in religion he did not know, the Lord would show it to him that night. During the meeting the word was applied with power to his heart, he saw clearly his state as a sinner, and at the after-service responded to an invitation to the penitents to go to another room, where he was enabled to see Jesus as his Saviour, and rejoice in a conscious sense of acceptance with God. The preacher then called on the young convert to pray, and he said very earnestly, "O Lord, convert every person in this room." He soon began to work for Christ, thus entering upon a course of laborious and successful service.

Attention was directed to the subject of increased ministerial support. On February 25th a circular was issued from the Cork and Bandon circuits, and addressed to "the Stewards and Leaders of Wesleyan Methodism in their several circuits throughout Ireland." In this document attention is called to the allowance to the preachers, only £16 per annum, their increased expenditure, and their utter inability to support themselves.

In the previous year, it is stated, the Cork, Bandon, and Belfast circuits had written to the Conference on this subject, but the ministers, while respectfully acknowledging their letter, had declined to move in the matter, "referring it to the consideration of the Connexion, as the only source from whence such a measure could successfully emanate." An earnest appeal is made to raise the allowance to twenty guineas. "This advance," it is said, "we are fully persuaded no one acquainted with this subject can think too much (on the contrary, were it practicable, it ought to be more), nor can we, consistently with the regard we owe to our ministers and our cause, see how such an advance can in reason and propriety be dispensed with." This is signed by Messrs. William Dawson and James Salter, stewards of Cork, and Sylvanus Robinson and George Harris, stewards of Bandon.

This circular called forth an "Address of the Dublin Leaders' Meeting to the Stewards, Leaders, and Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies throughout Ireland," in which approval is expressed of the proposal of the Cork and Bandon circuits, its adoption is urged, and the opinion is expressed that its success depends on the brethren in Ulster, as there could be no doubt with regard to other portions of the Connexion. A calculation is made of the contributions to the Connexional funds, from which it appears that the givings in the north of Ireland averaged 1*s.* 10½*d.* per member, while in the other provinces it was 7*s.* 6¼*d.*, and in Dublin 13*s.* 11½*d.* This address is signed by the general stewards, Messrs. John O. Bonsall and Thomas Brierly. Sligo, and probably some other circuits, acted immediately on the advice given, by raising the allowance to the preachers from £16 per annum to £21; and in time it appears to have been generally adopted throughout the Connexion.

The Rev. James Rentoul, a Presbyterian minister at Garvagh, evidently annoyed at the success of the Society in his neighbourhood, preached a series of sermons in which he denounced Methodism and its doctrinal teaching in no measured terms. The following are some of the statements made: "Arminianism is the most gloomy system on earth." "Any person dying in the Arminian faith cannot be saved." "By the term Arminians I mean the Wesleyan Methodists exclusively." "Mr. Wesley and the Methodists would have the world to understand that they

believe the doctrines of the Church of England, but they do not believe them." "Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher were under the influence of strong prejudices, and their minds were incapable of receiving truth from the Word of God or the writings of candid men." "The Wesleyans do not believe in the agency and influences of the Holy Ghost." "Mr. Wesley was a Pharisee." "Presbyterians are guilty of perjury who send their children to a Wesleyan school," and therefore those who do so in Garvagh "will not be given Church privileges." Such statements needed no reply; yet to prevent injury being done, the Rev. John Armstrong waited on Mr. Rentoul to have a friendly conversation with him, and if possible disabuse his mind; but he refused to have any intercourse with the Methodist preacher. A pamphlet containing a calm and reasonable reply to the Presbyterian minister was then published by J. Kelly.

A neat and commodious chapel, for the use of the Primitive Wesleyan Society, Ballymacarret, Belfast, was opened on Sunday, March 15th, by the Rev. Adam Averell. This venerable minister preached again, with much life and power, on the evening of the same day, to a large congregation in Academy street. During the former service Mr. Thomas M'Fann preached outside, to many who were unable to obtain accommodation inside the house. A flourishing Sunday-school, which had been for some years in successful operation, was transferred to the new premises. This was the sixth Methodist chapel in Belfast; it cost about £212, and it was completed free of debt, by means of subscriptions collected in the town and neighbourhood.*

In a letter dated April 11th the Rev. Adam Averell writes, "As to myself, now far advanced in my eighty-first year, the infirmities of old age are increasing upon me fast, and I am the more stirred up by the warning voice to do all I can in the service of my gracious Master, while He gives me power. I got home from Trillick in good health, after having spent from the 3rd of March, when I opened the new preaching-house in Newtownbutler, in travelling through the counties of Monaghan, Armagh, Down, Antrim, Tyrone, and Derry. And I purpose, please God, setting out on the 13th, for the Athlone circuit, and taking an extensive tour in that part of the kingdom.

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1835, p. 143.

While my merciful God indulges me with physical strength and mental capacity, I am resolved, by His grace, to spend them in His service and for the good of souls." *

The Conference of the Primitive Wesleyans was as usual held in Dublin, and commenced its sittings on June 24th. Mr. Thomas M'Fann was elected Secretary. Samuel Larminie was received as having travelled two years, and Charles Skuse one year; while James Robinson, jun., of the Charlemont circuit, John Heatley, and a third young brother were admitted on trial. Although there was a decrease in the membership of one hundred and twenty-eight, the Conference was able to report that the preaching of the word had been commenced in many places, "in several of which the people were comparatively destitute of the means of religious instruction, and in some cases without any Protestant place of worship," and many had proved the Gospel to be "the power of God unto salvation."

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Belfast, and commenced its sittings on July 3rd. Eighty-six preachers were present, and a number of lay gentlemen, from various parts of the country, attended the preparatory Committees. The Rev. Joseph Taylor presided, and was accompanied by the Rev. Robert Alder. The Rev. Robert Newton had also been appointed, but was detained in Scotland by sudden and very dangerous illness. The deepest sympathy was felt for him, and fervent prayers were offered for his restoration to health. One who was present at the Conference prayer-meeting writes, "I remember the impression those petitions made upon me, and after more than half a century, the scene is yet in my mind's eye, and the fervour of those that led, as well as the responses of those that followed, can never be forgotten." Years afterwards Dr. Newton said, "I believe I owe my life to the prayers of the Irish Conference. When I was getting better an eminent consulting physician said, 'We cannot account for your recovery, unless, indeed, we impute it to an iron constitution; for there are no principles of our profession by which we can explain it.' But the usual medical attendant subsequently stated, 'The doctor may talk of an iron constitution, but it's all owing to the Lord; His people are praying for you, Mr. Newton.'"

* Memoir of the Rev. A. Averell, p. 398.

An aged minister, the Rev. Zechariah Worrell, had, shortly after the preceding Conference, been called from a suffering life on earth to his everlasting rest in heaven. The Rev. Robert Cranston, who had taken part in the proceedings of the Conference, took suddenly ill, and in three days meekly resigned his spirit into the hands of his gracious Redeemer. Five preachers were admitted into full connexion. These included Samuel Jones, A.M., who had been appointed Classical Tutor of the new Institution, and John M'Kenny, who for about twenty years had been engaged as a missionary in India and Ceylon. Eight candidates were received on trial. Among these were George Vance, who had acted as a supply for Samuel Jones on the Sligo circuit, Thomas Hickey of Newtownbarry, John Hughes of Portarlington, John Farrell of the Donegal mission, Robinson Scott of Banbridge, Hugh Moore, and George Grant.

In the Address to the British Conference it is stated, "In some parts of the country, where apathy prevailed to an alarming extent, the Spirit has been poured from on high, many having been roused from their supineness to inquire, 'What must we do to be saved?' and the soil which had been barren, or productive only of the fruits of the flesh, now brings forth the fruits of righteousness." Although the number of emigrants amounted to three hundred and seventy-one, the returns showed an increase of four hundred and twenty-three, as well as an encouraging improvement in the Connexional funds. The Societies also had acquired greater consistency and stability, peace and harmony prevailed, and the members were firm in their attachment to the doctrines and discipline of Methodism.

The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry was appointed to Drogheda, where the Rev. John Magee, son of the Archbishop of Dublin, was vicar of St. Peter's. He was noted for his extreme Calvinism and violent hostility to Methodism. "Probably Toplady himself never exceeded this gentleman in wild harangues, which were as innocent of logic as of a Christian spirit." Meantime, public attention was directed to Methodism, and many flocked to the chapel, where they heard words whereby they might be saved. Alarmed at the success of the Society, Mr. Magee put forth all his strength to prevent the people adopting views he regarded

with utter abhorrence. One Sabbath evening, therefore, Mr. Tackaberry preached to a large congregation a noble defence of Evangelical Arminianism, the power and eloquence of which were subjects of conversation for many years. Thus the efforts of the vicar were frustrated, and Methodism took a deeper and more tenacious hold of the affections and respect of an intelligent community.

A striking instance or two of Ouseley's tact occurred during a visit he paid to this town. Taking his stand on the steps of the Tholsel, he began to sing a hymn, and soon a crowd assembled, consisting chiefly of Romanists. Having spoken to them for some time in his own familiar way, until he uttered a sentiment to which a woman objected, with great earnestness, in Irish, he turned toward her, and exclaimed, "Oh, did you hear that woman? did you hear what she said? She's drunk this time o' day. Look at her!" The poor woman said no more until the close, when she observed, with much emotion, "Well, that's the best sermon I ever heard." Mr. Ouseley concluded by repeating the Lord's Prayer, and as he was about to leave a man cried out, "You forgot the Hail Mary. Why didn't you say the Hail Mary?" There was a slight commotion, and Mr. Ouseley turned sharply on the speaker and said, "How dare you speak so disrespectfully of the blessed Virgin?" a rebuke which quieted all opposition, and appeared to meet with universal approbation.

When, at the Conference this year, Mr. Tackaberry was removed from Bandon the young converts, who loved and esteemed him greatly, thought they would lose all their religion; but the Lord was better to them than their fears. The Rev. William Reilly was appointed to the circuit, and before his arrival had a dream which greatly encouraged him. He thought that he saw the lawn of Park View, the residence of Mr. Cornwall, waving with ripe wheat, ready for the sickle. When he awoke he said, "We shall have a revival," and the Lord gave him the desire of his heart. On arriving, he set those recently led to the Saviour to work; many others were converted, including Miss Odell, and at least upwards of one hundred added to the Society.

Nine years previously the Rev. George Stephenson had been compelled, by increasing infirmities, to become a supernumerary, and settled in the town, where he devoted his remaining strength

to his beloved employment. Now, however, he was confined to the house and a constant sufferer, but his resignation and patience under protracted and intense pain were beautiful to contemplate. With uncomplaining good-humour he would answer the question, "How are you to-day?" saying, "I have got as far as the seventh chapter of Romans—'In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.'"

Mr. Reilly has recorded his impressions with regard to some of the country parts of the circuit. Of Bengour he says that no storm, rain, or snow could deter the early Methodists here from attending on the preaching of the word. Many of them had to cross large bogs, and when the nights were dark would carry a burning fagot to give them light. If, unfortunately, they should sink in the mud, and in extricating themselves prove minus a boot or shoe, they did not wait to recover it, but stuck a piece of wood in the spot, and guided by it in daylight, sought to regain what they had lost. Amongst the leading members at this time were old James Bride and his two devoted daughters, William Welply,* his good wife and family, and John Hosford† of Farranmareen and his excellent partner. One harvest season proved very wet and injurious to the crops, so that the farmers were greatly alarmed; but a very fine Sunday arrived, and the neighbours assembled to save their grain, while John Hosford, trusting in Providence, refused all offers of aid, went as usual to the place of prayer, and let his sheaves lie in the ridges. The day following proved equally fine, and John reaped his corn in good order, while what had been cut down on Sunday heated, and was seriously damaged, if not destroyed. The class-meetings, after the morning service, at Rushfield, where a chapel had just been erected, were especially means of great spiritual refreshment.

At Ballyneen, where a chapel had been erected thirteen years previously, Mr. Reilly met George Damery, who said to him, "The Rev. Mr. S—— came to me one day and asked, 'Are you not an advocate of sinless perfection? Can you live without committing sin?' 'Glory to God,' said I, 'by His grace I have been preserved from committing wilful sin for sixteen years!' 'There,' said he, pointing at me, 'is a man that thinks he enjoys sinless perfection, and I sin every hour in thought, word, and deed.'

* Son of John Welply. † Son of Benjamin Hosford. *Vide* i., 368.

'Lord have mercy on you!' said I; 'the very devils in hell could do no more than that.'" Thus the controversy ended, and had George studied Leslie's Short and Easy Method, he could not have done it better.

The Rev. George Burrowes was appointed as a missionary to Athlone and Castlereagh, which included parts of the counties of Westmeath, Galway, Roscommon, Longford, and King's County. At Lawrencetown he says there was no place of worship except the Methodist chapel, and the Romanists sent their children to the Wesleyan daily school. At Ferbane, by the exertion and aid of a kind friend, a house had been erected for the double purpose of a chapel and school. It was opened by the Rev. Samuel Wood, and the subsequent improvement in the Society and school justified the expenditure and effort which the building involved. At Kilbeggan especially, however, the Lord graciously encouraged His servants by permitting them to see fruit to their labours.

It may here be noted that Captain Richard Vicars, of the Royal Engineers, was quartered at Mullingar. Some twenty years previously, at St. John's, he had been induced to attend the Methodist services, and thus was led to become an earnest Christian, a devoted Methodist, and an acceptable local preacher. He got married; the lady of his choice was a pious member of the Society, and Hedley Vicars of the 97th was the fruit of this union. At Mullingar the amiable captain, with his wife and son, was a regular attendant at the Methodist chapel, and felt that he had no cause to be ashamed of the Church connected with which he had found the Saviour. And here, four years later, he died, respected and beloved by all who knew him. While on his deathbed he was visited by the Wesleyan ministers. The biographer of Hedley Vicars must of course have known that he was the child of Methodist parents, and deeply indebted to Methodist teaching and influence, yet he most carefully and studiously suppressed all reference to the Society.

The Rev. Hugh Murray, a nephew of Miss Lutton, was a curate in Sligo, and of him the Rev. G. Vance, D.D., records that "in deep piety, devotion to his calling, and usefulness it would be difficult to find his equal in any ministry." A very remarkable case of impression occurred to him. One morning he arose with

the idea that there was something requiring his presence in the house of two old women who were pious Wesleyans. He had previously called on them occasionally, and talked and prayed with them and two orphan children they were rearing; but except that he believed they were in straitened circumstances and religiously disposed, he knew no more. This morning, however, he endeavoured to shake off the impression, but it still pressed on him, until at last he seized his hat and bent his course to the cottage. As he drew near he heard the voice of prayer, and paused, unwilling to disturb the religious devotions of the inmates, and the language of the supplicant caught his attention and held him fast. The poor old woman was entreating the Lord to put it in some person's heart to give them as much as would keep them that day from dying of hunger. When prayer ended the curate opened the door and walked in. They were surprised at his early visit, but glad to see him. On inquiry, he found theirs to be such a case of concealed destitution as filled him with deep sympathy. It was Saturday, and he gave them relief for that and the following day. On the Sabbath morning he took for his text, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," introduced the preceding fact as an illustration, and took occasion to appeal to the congregation for assistance to relieve the case. When he retired to the vestry it was crowded; contributions were freely given, and Mr. Murray was thus enabled to raise for the two poor Methodist women a fund which kept them from want until God took them to heaven.*

On November 4th a new Wesleyan chapel was opened in Templemore by the Rev. Robert Young. Notwithstanding unfavourable weather, the congregations were large and appeared to be deeply impressed, and the collections were good. The lord of the soil and other local gentlemen not connected with the Society rendered valuable aid in this undertaking.†

On Sunday, November 8th, also, a new Wesleyan chapel, on the East wall, Londonderry, was opened for Divine service. The pulpit was occupied by the Rev. Joseph Beaumont, who preached two most eloquent and impressive sermons—one from Psalm

* Memorials of a Consecrated Life, pp. 316-17.

† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1835, p. 948.

cxviii. 22, 23, and the other from Hebrews vi. 18. The congregations filled the house, and included the Bishop of the diocese and the Mayor, who, with others, acted as collectors. The cost was about £1,100, which was raised by subscriptions, and the collections at the opening services amounted to £105. On the same day the Sunday-school scholars, numbering upwards of one hundred and fifty, headed by their superintendent, Mr. William M'Arthur, marched in order, singing hymns, from the old premises in Linenhall street to the new school-room under the chapel. Mr. M'Arthur had settled in the maiden city two or three years previously, entering upon an exceedingly prosperous business career, and identifying himself heartily with Methodism. For about a quarter of century he, with characteristic energy, perseverance, and liberality, took the lead in every local enterprise for the advancement of the cause, and then when, in consequence of increase of business, he removed to London, continued to take a lively and most generous interest in all that concerned the success of Irish Methodism.

The old chapel in Armagh was used by the Society for forty-eight years, but long before the close of that term it was found insufficient to accommodate the congregation. It was therefore determined to supplant it with another edifice, considerably larger and more comfortable. The first stone of the new building was laid on September 14th, by Captain W. W. Algeo, J.P., the devotional exercises being conducted by the Rev. Alexander Sturgeon and others. It was completed and opened for public worship shortly afterwards, the Rev. Robert Jessop being at the time superintendent of the circuit, and about twelve months later a commodious minister's residence was erected. As an interesting fact, it may be mentioned that, before the new chapel was completed, one night there came to the service a lad, the son of a godless and dissipated barber. This boy was awakened under the sermon, and sought and found mercy. His conscience then would not permit him to work on Sunday; and as he persevered in this determination, the father drove him from his house. The poor lad now applied to one of the Methodist leaders for advice; and he took him to his house, sought out a small shop, and became accountable for the rent. In this humble abode the youth began the world, and his first act was to put in the

window a show-board, with these words, "No shaving done here on Sunday." The business prospered wondrously, while that of the wicked parent declined, so that he earnestly besought his son to return. The youth consented, but only on condition that his show-board should accompany him and be put up in his father's window. This was done—the law of God was respected, and business prospered. After some time, when the family realized a little money, they emigrated to America, and the God-honouring and God-honoured barber's boy became the minister of one of the largest churches in New York.

Another incident in connection with the old chapel in Armagh may also be mentioned here. A respectable tradesman living in the city, a member of the Society and a devout servant of God, was seized with typhus fever. Great sympathy was felt for his wife and family, and prayer was offered for him that, if consistent with the Divine will, his valuable life might be spared. The poor distracted wife was dissatisfied that any condition was put into the petition, and one Sunday evening, when all hope of recovery had been given up by the doctors, she rushed into the chapel at the commencement of the service, and falling upon her knees, cried with intense agony, "Lord, spare him! Lord, spare him! Lord, spare him!" Then, without waiting for the service, she hastened home, and with fearful anxiety watched her husband all night. Next day there appeared a slight improvement in the symptoms, and he gradually recovered. In order to hasten his restoration, the doctors plied him with intoxicating drink. The result was that he acquired a love for stimulants, and was led on step by step by his passion until he became a confirmed drunkard, and under the influence of drink died, without God and without hope.

There lived in this city a clever but rather eccentric gentleman, called Dr. Colvan, who, although a Churchman, occasionally attended the services in the Methodist chapel, and sometimes took the chair at missionary meetings. One day, at a public dinner, he happened to be seated opposite to the Dean of Armagh, who said to a gentleman beside him, in tones sufficiently loud to be heard by Colvan, "I have consulted a great many doctors in my time—in fact, some of the most eminent in the profession—and paid them large fees; but in reality I have got

more benefit from some quack medicine than from all the prescriptions of the faculty." The doctor, who was jealous of the honour of his profession, became indignant and retorted, "I have been in the habit of attending public worship in the Cathedral, and have heard there many of the most celebrated and best-paid clergymen in the Church, and have occasionally attended the little Methodist chapel, and strange to say, I received more benefit from the ministrations in that lowly building than from all the services that I attended in the great Cathedral." The Dean was thus "shut up."

Dr. Colvan left a legacy of £6,000, to be invested in Government stock, and the interest divided equally between the ministers of the Protestant churches in the city, for the benefit of the poor of their respective congregations. The will was disputed, on the ground of testamentary incapacity and undue influence. It was insinuated that certain Methodists had induced him to leave money for Methodistic purposes, whereas all he left was £400 to the Missionary Society, while £1,250 was bequeathed to the missions of the Established Church. When therefore the case was considered in the Court of Probate, Dublin, it appeared that the opposing counsel had been instructed to attack the Methodists; and he did so sharply. Dr. Lynn was one of the witnesses, and the following is a report of his cross-examination: "I believe," said the counsellor, "you are a Methodist?" "Yes," answered the witness, "I have the honour to belong to that denomination." "You have been very zealous for that people since you joined them?" "I was always a Methodist, and my father before me." "Did you supply Dr. Colvan with a list of Methodist charities?" "No, but I furnished him with a list of the Protestant missionary societies in the kingdom, and left him to make his own selection to which he would leave legacies." "Do you sometimes preach?" "Well, I occasionally read a sermon to a country congregation, but I don't call that preaching;" a reply which raised a general laugh in court, as the rector of Armagh was seated near the witness. "Did you not, sir, attend church regularly?" "Yes, when I had no better place to go to." This proved too much for the lawyer, so he collapsed. The will was confirmed.

As God owned and prospered His work in Markethill, applica-

tion was made to Lord Gosford for ground on which to build a chapel, and he at once complied with the request, although soon afterwards an attempt was made to prejudice his mind and induce him to withdraw the grant. This having failed, it was said the promise was given to the wrong party—that it should have been given to the Primitive Wesleyans, and not the Wesleyan Methodists. But his lordship was equal to the occasion, and replied, "I will give ground to the Primitives also." This nonplussed the objectors, as the assumed objects of their sympathy were neither able nor disposed to build in the village. In due time, therefore, the foundation-stone of a Wesleyan chapel was laid, and a substantial house erected, in which many souls have been brought to God. It is worthy of note that the very day on which this chapel was opened for Divine worship one of the parties who had tried to prevent its erection died of fever, and not long afterwards the second was laid low with the same disease, while the third was deposed from his ministerial charge, and left the town in disgrace. Amongst the Methodist worthies of Markethill mention should be made of James Maxwell, son of the good woman who rented the first Methodist sanctuary in Armagh. He served in the army some years, was present at many engagements, and had, no doubt in answer to the prayers of his pious mother, many remarkable escapes. When in the West Indies he received a sunstroke, which eventuated in the total loss of sight, and caused him to return home. Shortly afterwards he became miserable on account of his sins, sought pardon, and obtained peace in believing. From that time he became valiant for the truth, went about doing good, and his labours were greatly blessed. There was a notable incident in connection with the death of this good man. When seized with his last illness, after some days of suffering, alarming symptoms set in, his case appeared hopeless, and this was gently announced to him by his devoted medical attendant, Dr. Lynn. Maxwell replied that he had no fear of death, as his mind was in peace, resting on the merits of Christ; "but," added he, "I am a little in debt, and if God would mercifully spare my life for fifteen days my quarter's pension would be due, and I could pay all." To the astonishment of the doctor, the disease at once came to a standstill, continued so for fifteen days, and then when a magistrate

had signed the pension paper the extreme prostration returned, and the patient died in a few hours.*

On Sunday, September 13th, a new chapel in connection with the Primitive Wesleyan Society was opened by Mr. Thomas M'Fann, at Dromara, in the county of Down. The history of this building is worthy of note. Some time previous to the period now under consideration one of the missionaries visited this village, and was kindly received by Mr. Hill, a man of deep piety and liberal spirit, but in humble circumstances, and under his friendly roof services were regularly held. It was, however, soon found that the house was too small to accommodate those who desired to attend, and Mr. Hill resolved to build a chapel. There were many serious obstacles to the accomplishment of this, no eligible site being apparently available, and no one able and willing to render assistance; but the devoted man was not easily daunted. Believing that God could remove every hindrance, he had recourse to prayer, and in answer to his supplications, suitable ground was obtained, free of rent. He then laboured with his own hands and prayed, and prayed and laboured, night and day, until without having received one shilling to assist him, the object of his prayerful solicitude was accomplished. The house was substantially built, slated, and well finished, and as an earnest of subsequent good, several of those who attended the services in it were soon aroused to serious concern about their immortal souls.†

Primitive Wesleyan Methodism had now existed in Dundalk for a number of years, through the influence of Mr. David R. Goodlatte, who had made it his home, and opened his house for religious service. In the winter of 1827-28 Mr. William Scott was invited to the town, and thenceforward it became a regular preaching appointment. The place, however, became too strait for the hearers, and the little flock were obliged, again and again, to seek a larger place of meeting, until the Lord put it into the hearts of His servants to arise and build a house for His worship and service. A valuable site was secured from the Earl of Roden at a nominal rent, and on it was erected a neat and substantial house. On October 4th this chapel was opened, the services being conducted by Messrs. Thomas M'Fann and John Ramsey.

* Lynn's Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, pp. 110-33.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1835, p. 375.

The entire cost of the building was £350, of which about one-half was subscribed when the work was completed.

A third chapel erected at this time, under the auspices of the Primitive Wesleyan Society, was in Langrish place, Dublin. Here in 1825 a concern was rented and fitted up as a preaching-house. This was subsequently enlarged by an awkward addition, but it proved so incommodious and uncomfortable that the leading friends now gladly seized the opportunity of purchasing the entire premises, including two dwelling-houses, in order to erect a new chapel, at a cost of about £500. This building was opened on Sunday, November 8th, Mr. William C. Rice preaching from Daniel vii. 13, 14, and Mr. George Robinson from Psalm cxxxiv. 2, and the collections amounted to upwards of £40.*

The determination of the British Conference to establish an Institution proved the occasion of a serious agitation in England. To some it seemed that the evils which would attend the opening of such a theological academy would far outweigh any possible advantages that might be gained, others were offended on account of the ministers into whose hands its control was placed, and there were many who objected to the manner in which they considered the proposal was thrust on the Connexion. Thus a controversy which commenced about a college soon extended to questions of Church polity. Soon after the Conference had closed, the whole Methodist community was surprised by the publication of a pamphlet entitled *Remarks on the Wesleyan Theological Institution for the Education of the Junior Preachers; together with the Substance of a Speech delivered in the London Conference of* 1834, by Samuel Warren, LL.D. In this brochure the circumstances are related which led the doctor to discover an attempt to invest Mr. Bunting and his immediate friends with a measure of power and influence highly dangerous to the liberties of the preachers and the people; and the whole project is denounced as fatally injurious, and one that a God of holiness could not look upon with approbation. Other pamphlets, as well as articles and letters in newspapers, appeared in rapid succession, causing much agitation, until at length "The Grand Central Association" was inaugurated, involving eventually a secession of about 20,000 members. An unsuccessful attempt was made

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, pp. 410-13.

to extend this agitation to Ireland, especially in Dublin, where there were a few dissatisfied spirits who to some extent sympathized with the movement. Of these James Lamb, who had been in the itinerancy and was now in business in the city, became a kind of ringleader. Thus a good deal of uneasy feeling was excited; but it soon passed off, and left apparently no permanent results.

Towards the close of this year several valuable bequests came to the Society through the death of the Hon. Miss Sophia Ward, who nearly sixty years previously had been converted through the instrumentality of Irish Methodism. This noble Christian lady was a thorough Protestant. When her nephew, Lord Bangor, gave a site on his estate for the erection of a Roman Catholic chapel, it displeased her greatly. Yet she was not bigoted, as may be seen from her distribution of bequests. Having left considerable sums to relatives, and a fair provision to servants and dependents, she bequeathed the residue of her property to religious and charitable purposes, one half being left to Methodism, including the Missionary Society, Irish Home Missions, the Worn-out Ministers and Ministers' Widows, and the Chapel Fund, and the other half to the Strangers' Friend, Hibernian Bible, Mendicity, Kildare Place, and Sunday-school Societies, the House of Refuge, and the poor of Ballyculter. The religious views of Miss Ward, however, were not altogether Wesleyan, but were moulded very much by the influence of her cousin, Richard W. Tighe, Esq., M.P., who was a disciple of William Law, and published a selection from his works, entitled *Divine Benevolence*. Numerous copies of this little volume were gratuitously distributed by Miss Ward. It was a happy providential circumstance which led her to secure the presence and assistance of a Mr. and Mrs. Baldwinson, who not only possessed the kind spirit, gentle manners, and personal accomplishments calculated to contribute much to the happiness of domestic life, but also were truly devoted to God and warmly attached to Methodism, and with unremitting care and fidelity ministered to both the physical and spiritual wants of their friend to the end. Accompanied by them, Miss Ward went to London, where she was seized with what proved to be her last illness. For some time her mind was in considerable doubt and perplexity. She

had not that clear evidence of her acceptance with God which it was her privilege to enjoy, but in answer to earnest, believing prayer, every doubt was dispelled, and she requested her friends on bended knees to thank God for what He had done for her. Thus, in London, on the 15th of December, resting only on the merits of Christ, she quietly fell asleep. Her remains were buried, without ostentation or display, in Twickenham churchyard, there to await the sound of the archangel's trump and the voice of God.

"Servant of God, well done! They serve God well
Who serve His creatures. When the funeral bell
Tolls for the dead there's nothing left of all
That decks the 'scutcheon and the velvet pall,
Save this. The coronet is empty show;
The strength and loveliness are hid below;
The shifting wealth to others hath accrued,
And learning cheers not the grave's solitude.
What's done is what remains. Ah, blessed they
Who leave completed tasks of love to stay
And answer mutely for them, being dead!
Life was not purposeless, though life be fled."

CHAPTER XVII.

1836.

On January 27th, 1836, Mr. George H. Irwin, who was on the Kilkenny Primitive Wesleyan mission, writes, "The cause of religion begins to look up on this station; many of our old friends are greatly stirred up, and earnestly praying for an outpouring of the Divine Spirit; and we have already had some blessed indications that the Lord is a hearer and answerer of prayer. A gracious Providence has opened my way into the town of Castlecomer, and by the exertions of some kind friends, we have got the use of a large and commodious place in which to hold forth the word of life. Our congregations are large and deeply attentive, and we have the prospect of much good. We have lately got up two tract societies that are likely to be very useful, and we have commenced a more active system of visiting. We call at barracks, hospitals, almshouses, and wherever we can get an open door, trusting in Him in whose name we sow the seed of life that we shall not run in vain, neither labour in vain."

Concerning the Clonmel mission Mr. William Herbert, jun., reports, "I think I may say with safety that the knowledge of the Gospel is rapidly increasing in this country. At Portlaw there is a steady and increasing congregation and a growing attachment to Methodism. In Mitchelstown, where the Romanists formerly came in large numbers to disturb and oppose our worship, many of them now come to hear with attention, and some, I hope, to pray and seek salvation. There are in this part of the country some hundreds of the members of the Romish Church reading or learning to read the Scriptures, and some have openly renounced Popery. Thus the light is breaking forth, and it is thought by many that we are on the eve of a blessed change. In Caher, where we have numerous attached friends, our

congregation is improving; and if we had a suitable place in which to hold our meetings, we would have a rising cause."

Messrs. William Craig and Thomas Wilson were on the county of Wicklow mission, where their labours were much owned of the Lord. On March 20th Mr. Wilson writes, "Obtained Tinahely market-house, in which, after a few hours' working, a large congregation assembled. I spoke from 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' The word took effect. A Roman Catholic who was present was convinced of his error, and renounced Romanism. He is the object of persecution, but continues steadfast." Preaching-places were secured at Rathdrum and several other places through the county, and the state and prospect of the mission were greatly improved. In autumn the lord of the soil granted the Society, for its services, a large room in a public building in Rathdrum; this was comfortably fitted up, and thus the local prospects became still brighter.

Mr. Dawson D. Heather was stationed on the Sligo mission, where he laboured with great energy and acceptance. To accommodate the increasing congregations in the town a chapel had been commenced about eighteen months previously, and he carried it to completion, so that it was opened by the Rev. Adam Averell on March 6th. In raising the means necessary for this undertaking Mr. Heather paid his first visit to England, and thus formed many acquaintances which in after-years proved the basis of more extensive operations on behalf of his beloved land.

Messrs. John Ramsey and Charles Skuse of the Newry mission say, "The God of missions has condescended to bless the exertions of His servants in this widely extended field, not only in the opening of new places for preaching and in the formation of new classes, but in the salvation of souls. On January 5th Drogheda was visited for the first time; the Mayor granted the use of the market-house, and arrangements were made for fortnightly services. In Castleblayney, which has been recently visited, the use of the market-house has also been secured, regular preaching established, and there are cheering prospects, a class of thirteen persons having been formed. In both of these towns several Romanists attend the services, and seem to hear with marked attention. The congregations in Dundalk are increasing in number, and Newry, which was long the most discouraging part

of this mission, is now manifesting symptoms of improvement. Upon the mission at large twelve new classes have been formed in the course of the quarter." Two months later Mr. Ramsey writes, "On the 15th inst. I visited Collon for the first time, and waited on Lord Ferrard, who kindly procured me a place to preach in. I visited nearly all the Protestant families in the town, together with some Romanists, and had an opportunity afterwards of preaching the glorious Gospel to a congregation of nearly two hundred."

The Lord graciously poured out His Spirit on the people of the country about Dromara, and much good was done. The Scripture-reader states, "During the past quarter we have had access to twelve new places, in which meetings are regularly held. I cannot attend the calls that are made to me to hold services; and not only have the people opened their houses to receive us, but many have opened their hearts to receive the Saviour. There is in all our meetings a universal bowing down before the Lord, anxiously seeking His salvation. At our quarterly meeting there were about forty penitents, and the power of the Lord was present, not only to break down, but also to heal."

Mr. George Stewart, who was appointed to Lisburn and Antrim, states, "This mission, with the exception of the town of Antrim, continues in a state of growing prosperity. During the last quarter we have formed four new classes, besides having obtained six additional leaders. Our March quarterly meetings were greatly acknowledged of the Lord. The meeting at Glenavy exceeded anything of the kind ever witnessed in that town previously—many souls were made happy in God. Amongst the converts on this mission are some who were once Socinians. One of these related his experience at the Glenavy meeting, and the effect was powerful while, with streaming eyes, he exclaimed, 'The Lord Jesus has saved my soul from double darkness.' At the Lisburn meeting another related his experience, in substance, as follows: 'For a length of time I durst not pray to Christ, lest I should be an idolater; but, by the blessing of God on the labours of the Methodist missionaries, I have obtained mercy through that precious blood which I once blasphemed.'"

From Augnacloy Mr. John Thompson writes, "Since my last quarterly report I have succeeded in forming four new classes,

besides having a considerable increase in some of the old ones. But what is of infinitely more value, we have had upwards of fifty persons who have made a profession of being converted to God, and who by their lives are proving the genuineness of the change which they have experienced. Our dear and respected brother William Herbert, sen., visited this town, and preached at our last quarterly meeting. It was truly a joyful season; eighteen persons were hopefully converted to the Lord. We are going forward with our new house at Emyvale; a considerable part of the stone work is up, and we hope to lose no time and spare no exertion till it be completed. In collecting money for this we have received much more encouragement than we at first anticipated."

On Tuesday morning, March 8th, the Rev. Robert Newton arrived in Dublin. Having on the previous Sunday preached in Leeds, and stated to his congregation that he was about to visit Ireland to open two chapels, and that he would gladly be the bearer of any help they were willing to give to these new erections, £25 was placed in his hands. One of these chapels was at Kingstown, where on the day of his arrival Mr. Newton preached twice, and the collections amounted to £62, to which £10 was added out of the gift of the friends in England. In this town the Rev. Charles Mayne, at the following Conference, settled as a supernumerary, and spent his remaining strength in the work to which he had devoted his life. There are those still in the neighbourhood who gratefully spoke of his efforts and venerate his memory.

The second new chapel was in Wexford, where the house in Allen street, built in 1802, having proved too small for the increasing congregations, although a gallery had been added, a plot of ground in a central situation in Rowe street was secured for the erection of a more commodious edifice. Here a neat and comfortable house was built, at a cost of about £750, and the opening service was conducted on the evening of March 9th. The chapel was crowded, and the collection amounted to £74, together with the balance of the English subscriptions. On the following morning a breakfast-meeting was held in the Assembly-room, at which about three hundred persons were present, and eloquent addresses were delivered by Mr. Newton and others. Thus the work in the town was placed in more hopeful circumstances, and

the expectations thus raised were fully realized. A chapel was also erected at this period in Enniscorthy, and was opened by the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry.

The Revs. Theophilus Lessey and William Shaw were appointed on the missionary deputation in the south. During the visit of the latter to Wexford he preached from Isaiah xliii. 13, and in the course of the sermon described the chariot of the Gospel, and the Redeemer taking up to Himself in it those who were loving, loyal, and zealous, to assist Him in distributing His favours. Robert J. Meyer, who was present, says he felt almost overpowered, and cried inwardly, if not audibly, "Lord, take me up! Lord, take me up!" and the Lord did take him up, then and there calling him to the sacred work of the ministry. This solemn intimation was ratified on a Sunday morning shortly afterwards, in the little chapel at Duncannon. The youthful local preacher having gone there to fill the place of Mr. Darby, who was unable to attend to his appointment, the officials could not conceal their feelings of disappointment; but the Lord answered for Himself, first by impressing on the mind of young Meyer the words of Christ, Luke x. 16, and then by giving such clearness, point, and power to the word preached that the leaders rallied round the preacher and acknowledged that the Lord was with him.

Mr. Lessey was down amongst other places for Bandon, and the friends there asked him to preach at noon on the Monday. His reputation had reached the town, so great things were expected; the warehouses were closed, all business was suspended, and a large congregation assembled to hear what proved to be one of the greatest sermons to which they had ever listened. The text was Colossians ii. 14, 15. "Great good was done by that one sermon," says Mr. Reilly, "and in his platform effort in the evening Mr. Lessey exceeded himself."*

A deeply interesting breakfast-meeting was held in Dublin, in connection with the annual assembly of the preachers of the district in May. It was intended for the children of ministers, about sixty-two of whom, including a few grandchildren, were present. They were addressed by the Revs. Charles Mayne, William Ferguson, Henry Deery, Michael Murphy, James B.

* Unpublished MS. of the Rev. W. Reilly, in the hands of the Rev. J. W. M'Kay D.D.

Gillman, Fossey Tackaberry, and others, each of whom gave an account of his religious experience or reminiscences of his Christian work. It appears that this service had been inaugurated in the previous year by the Rev. Thomas Waugh, but we have no details of the meeting then held, or of any other of a similar character that took place for many years subsequently.

At Carrickmacross, although Methodist services had been held in the town irregularly for about nine years, the cause had not made much progress. Now, however, a fresh and successful start was made by the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry, who secured the use of the market-house. He says, "We walked over to Carrickmacross, and I gave a Temperance lecture to about four hundred persons, more than half of whom were Romanists. They listened with the deepest attention. I published for preaching on the following evening, when, to my surprise, the large room was packed to suffocation. Most of the Protestants in the town, with about three hundred and fifty Romanists, heard with solemn interest, while I applied the affectionate entreaty and tender expostulation in Ezekiel xxxiii. 11. This is amazing. I preached here one evening in August, 1822, to eight persons, and on another to thirteen; but now we have by far the largest congregation on the circuit." From this period services were regularly and successfully held in the town.

On June 29th the Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Conference commenced its sittings in Dublin, with the Rev. Adam Averell as President, and Mr. Robert Connolly as Secretary. Seven candidates were admitted on trial. These included Robert Campbell of the Tanderagee circuit, William H. Mervyn of the Cavan circuit, John M'Ilroy of the Lisburn mission, and William Lindsay of the Newtownstewart circuit. One death was reported, that of William C. Rice, who had been seized by a malignant fever, induced by over-exertion, and after an illness of a few days, was called home to everlasting rest. There was a decrease in the membership of three hundred and ninety-seven. A deputation from the Hibernian Temperance Society having waited on the Conference, it was resolved, "We pledge ourselves to abstain altogether from the use of ardent spirits, except when administered as a medicine —according to the Society rule in this case—and to use every means in our power to influence others to do the same, and

further, by our countenance and advocacy to aid in the formation of Temperance societies on our respective stations." Mr. Thomas M'Fann was appointed Travelling Secretary to the Missions, while Mr. George Revington acted as Resident Secretary and Book Steward. For seven years the former, in the pulpit, on the platform, and by personal appeals advocated the claims of the Society with much power, acceptance, and success.

During the Conference the preachers and representatives resolved on presenting their President with some mark of their esteem and love. A subscription was at once entered upon, and it was agreed that the presentation should consist of a covered gig, horse, and harness. When informed of what was in contemplation, Mr. Averell strongly objected, on the ground that it would violate the principle on which he had acted for nearly half a century, and upon which he still intended to act—that of preaching the Gospel gratuitously. But when it was urged that the gift was intended only as an expression of regard and affection he was so overcome with emotion as to be scarcely able to give expression to his feelings, and at once acceded to the wishes of his brethren. The vehicle, which was the only one he used during the rest of his life, he frequently called "the Chariot of Love."

The Wesleyan Conference began in Dublin on July 1st. Nearly one hundred ministers were present, including the Rev. Richard Reece, the President, the Rev. Robert Newton, the Rev. John Beecham, the Rev. Egerton Ryerson of Canada, and the Rev. John Tackaberry of the American Methodist Episcopal Church. James Carter was elected by seniority a member of the Legal Conference, instead of Alexander Sturgeon, superannuated. Seven young men were received on trial as candidates for the ministry. These included William M'Garvey of Rathmelton, Robert Hamilton (2nd) of Larne, Robert Black, and Robert Wallace. During the year two supernumeraries had been removed by death—one of these Francis Armstrong, at the advanced age of eighty years, and the other Robert Cranston, at a much earlier period in life, yet both, having kept the faith, finished their course with joy, and left a blessed testimony to the love and power of Christ. Notwithstanding a loss of five hundred and twenty-two members by emigration, there was a net increase in the total number of

three hundred and ninety-eight, showing on the whole an accession of one thousand and eighty-two.

The public services of the Conference, more especially the anniversary of the opening of Abbey street chapel and the missionary meeting, were of unwonted interest and attended by unusually large numbers. The former was held on Sunday, July 3rd, when the Rev. Robert Newton preached with marvellous eloquence to a crowded congregation, "hundreds being unable to obtain admission," and the collection amounted to upwards of £100. On the following day at noon, the Conference having adjourned for the purpose, the annual meeting of the Hibernian Missionary Society was held in the large room of the Rotundo, which was filled with a deeply interested audience; the Lord Mayor took the chair, and the meeting was considered "the best of the kind ever held in Ireland," while the proceeds were more than double what had been received at any time previously.

At this period a young man of seventeen, Wallace M'Mullen, became a member of the Society in Belfast, and thus entered upon a course of most important and extensive usefulness in connection with Methodism. He was a native of Newtownards, where his father, mother, and two uncles had been converted, through the labours of the Rev. John Hill. The preachers of the Donaghadee circuit regularly visited and preached at his father's house, and he was thus early impressed with a feeling of reverence for Methodist ministers. While still very young he was put to business in Belfast, and his residence in this town at that time continued for seven years. We have reason to believe it was during this period he was led to religious decision and brought into the enjoyment of personal piety. He joined the Society in 1836. Soon after his conversion he was induced to employ his gifts in works of usefulness, and there are several in and around Belfast who remember with pleasure and thankfulness his labours as a local preacher.

The Revs. John Hill and Robert Hamilton (2nd) were appointed to the Tanderagee circuit, which had been reconstructed at the Conference. On his way to the head of the circuit, where a new chapel had been erected about twelve months, Mr. Hamilton was informed that there were in the town Jeremites and Rowleyites, and on his arrival learned that the allusion was

to the two leading supporters of the Wesleyans and Primitives, Mr. Jeremiah Mains and Mr. James Rowley. There were many difficulties in connection with the rearrangement of the circuit, but Mr. Hill quietly and wisely surmounted them all. He also set to work correcting certain irregularities that had arisen, such as protracting country services until a late hour and drinking intoxicating beverages at funerals. And when many of the people were called upon to pass through troubles, from losses in trade and other causes, he preached on suitable themes, with power and blessing to those who heard. One sermon in particular, on a lovefeast Sunday, from "I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread," made a deep and lasting impression on the congregation.*

The Rev. Walter Oke Croggon having been appointed, by the British Conference, Superintendent of the Missions and Schools in Ireland, in autumn proceeded on a tour of inspection through Ulster, and reports, "I consider the missions, schools, and readers of great importance to this country. The different agents pursue their work, but not without opposition, and that too from many quarters; and though much has been done for Ireland, there is a field for greater work yet." In November and December Mr. Croggon visited the midland and southern counties, and writes, "In the south the Protestants are few compared with those in the north, but I thought it delightful to find little groups of pious people in different parts of the country. If we had but free access to the people of Ireland, to preach the Gospel to them, I have no doubt that greater good would soon be done. But, alas! the prohibitions of those who profess to have the spiritual charge of the greater part of the population forbid their attending our ministry; and latterly these prohibitions are much increased, for the Romish priests are more vigilant since controversy has been so pursued by the Protestants. Indeed, in most places we have no intercourse with the Roman Catholics as it regards religion. But our duty is to persevere and use all appointed means." †

The Rev. William Cooke was appointed by the New Con-

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1875, p. 57.

† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1837, pp. 68, 383.

nexion Conference to Belfast, as Superintendent of the Irish Missions. This was an unusual distinction for one in the tenth year of his ministry, but it was well deserved, as he had given proof of such rare powers of preaching and administration. Having visited the stations, and made himself acquainted by personal inspection with the condition of the people, he reorganized the circuits. Quickened by the example of his piety and zeal, the missionaries devoted themselves to their arduous work with renewed fervour. As the immediate result of the adoption of a wiser policy and stricter discipline, there was a numerical decrease of members reported at the end of the year; but confidence in the stability of the mission, which had been much shaken, was restored, scattered Societies were again gathered together, the languid were revived, and all began to work with the energy produced by the hope of brighter days. In Bangor, where the Rev. William M'Clure was stationed, Mr. Cooke says the cause was steadily advancing, and several judicious plans of usefulness were in operation which could not fail to give increasing efficiency to the Church of God. In the town there was a large and flourishing Sunday-school, and several surrounding villages were benefited by missionary exertions.

Mr. Thomas Wilson was appointed by the Primitive Wesleyan Conference to the Kilkenny mission. In the city itself, about eight months previously, a house was secured at a yearly rent, and fitted up for religious services, but the cause was feeble; at Carlow the use of the Scotch church was obtained for Methodist meetings; and at Borris Mr. Wilson waited on Thomas Kavanagh, Esq., M.P., and was granted the court-house, which was well filled, Lady Harriet having taken much pains to have the service well announced. A month later the missionary writes, "I proceeded to Borris, and surely I can testify God was present in a very marvellous manner. I preached this morning in the house of a Member of Parliament who was born a Roman Catholic, and in the place where mass was once celebrated Mr. Kavanagh and his noble lady both attended, as well as all his household and many people from the neighbouring village. I never before felt such liberty in delivering the Divine message. In the court-house in the evening I had also a large attendance." About two months subsequently Mr. Kavanagh died and, it is to be hoped, passed to the home above.

Early in 1833 a site was secured and money collected by Mr. Joseph M'Cormick, for the erection of a new Primitive Wesleyan chapel in Boyle; but the undertaking was not carried on with sufficient energy and enterprise, and thus the building remained long on hand. Now, however, under the superintendence of Mr. James Herbert, it was completed, and on August 14th opened by the Rev. Adam Averell, the new house not being capable of accommodating all who desired to be present. The services continued to be well attended, and Divine power accompanied the preaching of the word.

Thomas C. Maguire had been employed during the previous year as an assistant missionary on the Newtownbutler circuit, and was now sent to Carrick-on-Shannon. He was born at Trasna, near Tempo, where from earliest years he had been the subject of the gracious influences of the Spirit, to which when very young he yielded, and thus obtained a sense of sins forgiven. He then engaged heartily and successfully in Christian work. His situation in his new sphere, especially at first, was peculiarly trying, having only two stopping-places, and being left to obtain others as best he could; but nothing daunted, he started on his work of exploration in the midst of a moral wilderness. Sometimes, on entering a new place, he was hooted and cursed, and in other cases received with civility, but got neither food, nor shelter, nor encouragement. Once having spent a whole day in visiting, talking to, and praying with the people, he had to walk back to Mohill, nine miles, without refreshment. At length starting from Drumsna, and making his way with much labour, many privations, and not a little danger, he was enabled to open a number of new preaching-places where the people were in darkness and the shadow of death. At Ballinamuck—famous in Irish history—he was kindly received and entertained by the sergeant of police, who provided a room in the barrack for a service, and sent his men to protect the members of the congregation as they returned to their respective homes, this country being in such a very disturbed state. Two farmers' houses were also opened for the preaching of the word in this neighbourhood, and the people heard the truth gladly. But persecution soon arose. Seven of the cattle, a mare, and a foal were taken one night from the outhouses of one of these families, and cut in pieces. The owner

was so reduced in circumstances by this loss that after waiting for about two years, he received a small compensation and emigrated to America. Openings were also secured in Ballinalee, Edgeworthstown, Carrickboy, Callow, and the neighbourhood of Ballymahon. The missionary met with great difficulties in these districts at first, so that his faith, patience, and perseverance were well tested; but the Lord gave him such abundant blessing, and ultimately made his way so plain, that before December he had twenty-six monthly stopping-places, most of which remain to this day centres of light and blessing in the midst of ignorance, superstition, and sin. Not a few Romanists heard the word of life, sought earnestly the truth as it is in Jesus, and did not seek in vain.

Mr. Maguire obtained a preaching-place not far from Boyle, and by extensive visiting raised a considerable congregation of people, who greatly needed religious instruction; but persecution soon arose. A number of men who would now be called "Moonlighters" one night surrounded the house in which a widow and three children resided; and the son—a lad of thirteen—when he saw the danger, bravely said, "Mother, if you load the two guns I will fire away, and try to put them to flight." She agreed, and thus their assailants were frightened and beat a hasty retreat. On the following morning it was discovered that an attempt had been made to set the house on fire, but had been frustrated by the courage of the boy. After a noble struggle, however, with the continued and unprovoked hostility of their Romanist neighbours, the family was compelled to emigrate to America.

On this extensive mission there were many hardships and not a few marked instances of Divine guidance and protection. Thus on one occasion Mr. Maguire, having walked most of the way from Carrick-on-Shannon to Keenagh, about thirty miles, on his arrival found that one of the preachers was there, and would remain for the following Sabbath. He therefore called on a leader and inquired if he knew any place, within moderate distance, where he might do some evangelistic work, as he did not wish to be idle on the Lord's day. "Would you," replied the other, "like a walk of about ten miles?" "Not very much if I could avoid it; but if you think there is hope of doing good, I will try." The

leader then drew on a paper a map of the road, and marked several places, saying, "The first of these is three miles distant, and if you can effect an entrance amongst the few Protestants there it will be well, for they have great need of the Gospel; but if you don't succeed you must go on farther, and failing there, farther still." The missionary then proceeded on his journey, called at the first house marked, told his errand, and was met with contempt and ridicule. He then went on to number two, and was received with civility, but told that he could have no congregation there, as there were only a few Protestants, and they had some hay to stack. He next journeyed to number three, which he reached as the shades of night were falling, but the proprietor spoke very roughly, called him an impostor, and ordered him to be off at once, or he would make him suffer. Wearied in body and sick at heart, the servant of God plodded on, and prayed earnestly for Divine direction. On reaching his destination he walked in, sat down, and asked the good woman of the house for a night's lodging. She replied, "We don't keep lodgers;" then, after a pause, inquired, "Are you a Methodist preacher?" and being informed that he was, cordially invited him to remain, and showed him the utmost hospitality. Overwhelmed with kindness, the missionary asked why she showed him such attention. "Sir," she said, "in my early days the Methodist preachers visited my father's house, preached there, taught me hymns and Scripture, and I was warmly attached to them. But after I married, I settled in this barren place, where I did not see the face of a Christian these twelve years." Thus an opening for religious services was obtained in a benighted district, others also were soon afforded, the congregations increased, and much and lasting good was effected.

Mr. John M'Ilroy was sent to the Banbridge mission, where his labours were much acknowledged in convincing and converting power. On visiting Dromore, he was unable to obtain a house in which to preach, so he took his stand on the stocks, in the market-square, discoursed to two or three hundred persons, and such was the impression made that within three months a class of thirty-five members was formed. He then obtained the use of the market-house, and afterwards rented a house in Gallows street. At Rathfryland he secured the court-house, and

at Moira a school-house, thus gaining a footing for the Society in each of these towns. "On the whole," he says, "we have, through the Lord's blessing, succeeded during the past quarter in opening fifteen new preaching-places and forming five new classes, with upwards of one hundred members, besides an increase in those already in existence." *

In Lisburn, at the close of 1835, the foundation-stone of a new Primitive Wesleyan chapel, with which a preacher's residence was to be connected, was laid by William Gregg, Esq. In February, 1836, it is recorded, "A commodious new preaching-house and residence are in a state of considerable forwardness. The site is very convenient and beautiful." And on October 31st Mr. John Buttle writes, "Our quarterly meetings have been graciously owned by God. In Lisburn our new house was nearly filled, and we had above thirty penitents, five of whom professed to have received the pardoning love of God. At Glenavy also the Lord poured out His Holy Spirit, and we had more than forty penitents, seeking redemption through the blood of the Lamb." †

At Trillick, where a Wesleyan chapel had been erected in 1834, a Primitive Wesleyan preaching-house was built this year. The services in connection with its opening took place on Sunday, December 18th, when three meetings were held. At ten o'clock the Rev. Adam Averell preached, at four o'clock Mr. John Milligan, and at seven Mr. Robert Wilson. At each of these services the house was crowded, while in the afternoon several persons were unable to get admittance. Nearly all of the morning congregation went *en masse* to the church of Kilskeery, where the rector in his sermon expressed his gratification at the erection in the parish of the house that had that morning been dedicated to the service of God. ‡

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* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1836, p. 471.
† *Ibid*, pp. 152, 472.
‡ *Ibid*, 1837, p. 79.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1837.

Gideon Ouseley, in the midst of his labours, having been seized with violent illness, was unable to resume his loved work for about two months. At length, on January 1st, 1837, he preached at Lucan, but was unable to do so again until Good Friday, when he occupied the pulpit of Whitefriar street chapel. During this interruption to his ordinary toil he was not idle, but wrote letters which were inserted in the *Dublin Evening Packet*, and also one or two pamphlets. At length, after a trial trip of a week or so in Queen's County, he ventured on a journey in May to Enniskillen, where on the Sunday he preached once in the open air and twice in the chapel, in addition to attending the service in the Episcopal church. He had already passed his seventy-fifth year, but in sixteen days now spent in this part of the country he preached six-and-thirty times, of which eight were in markets and streets, and his own account is that he was "nothing the worse, not even fatigued." Besides Irvinestown, he visited Pettigo and Ballyshannon. In the latter place he states that a Primitive Wesleyan preacher had been violently assailed while attempting to preach in the street, but that he himself was heard by an immense crowd, "as quietly as if they had been all our own people." In returning through Enniskillen he became ill again, took remedies, did not sleep, and in the morning feared that he would disappoint the people, who, according to announcement, expected him to preach three times. "However," he says, "I rose from bed, bowed myself in humble prayer to my Lord, and laid the matter before Him. He heard me—adored be His name; I was well at once, breakfasted, preached at eleven, went to church, as has been my manner from the beginning, and in doing so I found the Lord blessed me; spoke to many in

the street, and in the evening preached, without either illness or weakness, to a crowded chapel." He again discoursed to them next morning, and in the evening to the people of Lisbellaw.* Such were some of the marvellous labours of this grand old missionary.

At Dunmanway the preachers were entertained by good old Mrs. Atkins † and her kind family, and had most gracious seasons at the services. But the chapel was a very awkward and inconvenient concern. It had been originally a cabin, about thirty feet in length and fifteen wide, and an addition had been made to it so as to make it as broad as it was long, but it was even then too small for the congregation. So arrangements were made for the erection of a new and good chapel, in an excellent situation, and Messrs. John H. Atkins and William J. Norwood, especially, entered with great zeal and energy into the project. During the progress of the building, the Rev. Walter O. Croggon visited the town, *en route* for Lisbealid, to inspect the school there, and says the parochial school-house was kindly lent him to preach in; it was well filled, and they felt it good to be there. The opening services of the new chapel were conducted by the Revs. William Stewart, John F. Mathews, and James B. Gillman, and their discourses are said to have been "a rich Gospel treat." Mrs. Atkins rejoiced greatly at the numerous tokens of the prosperity of Methodism in the town compared with what had been its state fifty-four years previously, when she joined the Society, and referring to that event, said that having expressed to a friend her intention to become a Methodist, she was asked, "Do you know what it will cost you?" she replied, "No; what will it cost me?" "You must give up all gay parties, balls, and the like." "And is that all?" she answered; "then, with God's help, I'll do that." And now, after the lapse of more than half a century, she thanked God for the choice she had made, and for seeing her children and her grandchildren all heartily identified with the Society. Mr. Thomas Bryan, son-in-law of the Rev. Andrew Hamilton, sen., was one of the most worthy, active, and liberal friends of the Society. He had a brother-in-law, a Mr. Wood, who was also a hearty Methodist,

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 271-72.

† *Vide* Vol. i., p. 370.

and a man of immense strength, concerning whose powers numerous stories are told.

At Kilrush, near Bandon, in the house of Captain Poole, there was a good society and congregation. It was believed that but for Methodism, Protestantism would have become extinct in this neighbourhood. When the Hon. and Rev. Charles Bernard, now Bishop of Tuam, was appointed curate of the parish the rector could tell him nothing about his parishioners, and to obtain any information he had to apply to Captain Poole and the parish priest!

The May district meeting of this year in Sligo was rendered memorable by the bringing forward of William Arthur as a candidate. He preached one evening, during the sittings of the district, with wonderful power. No doubt the sermon was open to criticism on some points, but none could think of that during its delivery. Many under it were convicted; one young man said he felt as if the flames of the pit were coming up about him. Mr. Arthur has since preached more eloquent sermons, but not one more remarkable for the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. He had been requested by the Rev. R. T. Tracy to supply for him for a fortnight on the Sligo circuit, and here his labours were so acceptable and so Divinely owned that he was induced to remain for about three months, his youthful appearance, earnest piety, burning zeal, and impassioned eloquence giving a unique attraction to his ministrations. He visited and laboured in town and country, and set them all aflame. Congregations were large wherever he preached, and many were brought to God.

For nine years Belfast had three ministers in the active work stationed in the town. Those now appointed were the Revs. Thomas Waugh, Thomas T. N. Hull, and John B. Bennett, M.D.; but Mr. Hull had left for France. However, there were but two Wesleyan chapels in use, those in Donegal square and Ballymacarret; Fountain lane and Cotton court having been given up. A third Sunday place of worship was formed by two rooms in what was externally a private house in York street, nearly opposite the entrance from it to Frederick street, and the prospects here were such that it was deemed necessary to erect a new chapel in the neighbourhood. The

consent of Conference having been obtained, inquiries were made about a site, and two or three of the leaders seeing a plot in Frederick street, at once secured it. Many of the leading friends regarded the position and terms as most undesirable, and strongly opposed the project. Feeling ran high on the subject; two parties were formed in the Society, the one consisting, amongst others, of Joseph Young, Samuel Hunter, and James Wilson, and the other of the Lindsays, William M'Connell, and Philip Johnston, and each considered themselves in the majority. When the subject came on for discussion in the leaders' meeting or building committee, Mr. Waugh proposed that the minority should submit to the majority, and this was accepted. The vote was then taken, and the Frederick street site was adopted, evidently not on the merits, but on the ground that the Society was in honour committed to it. Although it was years before the ill-feeling engendered by this dispute subsided, it must be admitted that few chapels in Ireland have been so honoured and blessed of God in times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord as the building concerning which there was so much and such deep feeling. The opening services were conducted on Thursday, August 31st, when the Rev. Robert Newton discoursed on Psalm xxvi. 8 and Romans i. 16; and on the following Sunday, when the Rev. Theophilus Lessey was the preacher. The collections amounted to £210. Mr. Tackaberry says, "Mr. Newton was quite himself, and Mr. Lessey's sermons were magnificent specimens of pulpit eloquence and power." Mr. Reilly adds, "Mr. Lessey exceeded himself, as he does in general every one else, while he unfolded 'There is One here greater than the temple.'" A Christian lady who was present writes, "Lessey was grand on the exalted Christ. Mr. Reilly sat in the pulpit behind him, covered his face with his handkerchief, and wept freely out of pure enjoyment."

Mr. Alexander Stewart was now for a fourth time appointed by the Primitive Wesleyan Conference to Tanderagee. A preaching-house had been erected here in 1821, but the accommodation of this having become inadequate to the requirements of the congregation, an eligible site had been secured from the lord of the soil, and the erection of a new and larger chapel commenced on it.

This building, which was considered as not excelled in neatness and convenience by any other edifice of the same kind in the kingdom, was opened for religious worship on Friday, April 14th, by the Rev. Adam Averell and Mr. Dawson D. Heather, and on the following Sunday by Messrs. M'Fann and Heather. The congregations were large, and the collections, which amounted to upwards of £90, were regarded as most encouraging, in view of the commercial depression and scarcity of money that prevailed.

The Primitive Wesleyan Society sustained a serious loss in the death of Thomas R. Guest, Esq., J.P., who had in 1820 been converted to God in Cork, and for several years attended the Conference as a lay representative. He subsequently removed to Cardiff, and there identified himself heartily with the Wesleyan Methodists, proving himself to be a faithful leader and acceptable local preacher, yet also continuing a true friend and liberal supporter of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism in Ireland. He died in the triumph of faith.

On June 28th the members of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference assembled in Dublin, and elected Mr. Alexander Stewart as their Secretary, an office which he held for this and the following year. Five candidates were admitted on trial. These included James Griffin of Dublin and Pierce Herbert of Moybane. Owing to extensive emigration, and to a few of the circuits not having been adequately supplied with preachers, there was reported a decrease in the membership of eight hundred and twenty-seven; but notwithstanding this, it was considered that the work never was in a healthier or more promising state. A humble and respectful address to the Queen, expressive of attachment to her royal person, love for the British constitution, and appreciation of the talent, piety, and activity of the clergy of the Established Church, was adopted unanimously.

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Cork, and commenced on June 30th, about seventy ministers being present. The Rev. Dr. Bunting presided, and he was accompanied by the Revs. Robert Newton, Robert Alder, Edward Frazer, an emancipated slave from the West Indies, and Shah-Wun-Dais, or John Sunday, a converted North American Indian. Several lay gentlemen attended the preparatory meetings, of which one of the most interesting and important was that of the Missionary Committee,

on account of the cheering reports presented from the different stations on which the missionaries, schoolmasters, and Scripture-readers had been labouring. The first act of the Conference was the cordial adoption of an address of condolence to Her Majesty the Queen, on the death of her late royal uncle, and of congratulation on her accession to the throne. The Rev. Henry Deery was elected a member of the Legal Conference, in place of the Rev. Matthew Tobias, superannuated. Two supernumerary preachers were reported as having died during the year—William Armstrong, sen., and Castor Clements. The latter having purposed to remove with his family to America, sailed from Liverpool, the vessel was wrecked, and all on board perished. Six candidates were received on trial. These included David Robinson of the Ballyshannon and Pettigo circuit, James Donald, and Robert J. Meyer. John H. Atkins, William J. Norwood, and William Arthur were put down as the first in Ireland to reap the benefits of the new Institution. The President, however, said with reference to Mr. Arthur, "I wish you would give us that young man for India," and Mr. Waugh replied at once, "Then we make you a present of him for India." This was a noble gift. Ireland to a certain extent lost one of her most devoted and brilliant sons; but it was a gain to the Christian Church and the cause of God throughout the world. At the previous British Conference a discussion had taken place on the ordination of ministers by the imposition of hands, during which Mr. Waugh stated that the Irish Conference intended to adopt the practice, and if their English brethren delayed to act, the Irish would in this instance secure the precedence. Accordingly, it was now cordially and unanimously resolved that "in future, imposition of hands be added to our usual method of receiving preachers into full connexion," and James Murdock, Thomas Beamish, and John Foster were thus solemnly set apart to the full work of the ministry. The service was conducted by Mr. Newton, Dr. Bunting having previously left for England.

In the Address to the British Conference it is said, "With us the past year has been peculiarly marked by afflictions of various kinds. Unprecedented depression in trade and general commercial embarrassments have produced painful and distressing pecuniary results to many families and individuals. The unusual severity of the winter season, combined with the awful prevalence

of disease and death, for a length of time greatly diminished the attendance at all our religious services; and the mortality among the members of our Society has been greater than even during the cholera. The still prevailing political and religious contentions, which have so long disturbed and afflicted our population, have kept up the spirit of emigration, whereby thousands of our Protestant countrymen have been led to remove, with their families, in search of an asylum in foreign lands; and amongst these emigrants we have to reckon six hundred and ninety-two of our Connexion, some of whom were, in their respective localities, the most active, influential, and useful agents of our Society. It may be hoped that they are gone to augment and advance the interests of the Christian cause in other parts of the world; yet we are not without our fears that our losses are more than their gains. Under these untoward circumstances, it will not be thought strange, although to us it is matter of deep humiliation and sorrow, that we have suffered a diminution of our numbers to the amount of four hundred and twelve below the return of last year. This declension, however, has taken place on a very few circuits, while on others we have been favoured with a considerable accession. Taking the number of emigrants into account, there appears an increase of two hundred and eighty over and above those who supply the vacancies occasioned by other causes. Besides, there are other considerations which bear a cheering aspect connected with our general interests in this country. The generosity of the members and friends of the Society, in their contributions to our several funds, has not declined, the lives of all the brethren employed in our regular itinerancy have been graciously preserved, and we have had eleven young men strongly recommended by their district committees as candidates for our ministry, and approved by the Conference, six of whom have been appointed to circuits, and five placed on the list of reserve. On a review of the whole, notwithstanding the disadvantages which we experience, we have much cause of thankfulness, and find ground of encouragement and hope for more abundant blessings on our labours in the ensuing year."

The religious services held as usual during the time of Conference were well attended, and it was felt both by the preachers and congregations that a Divine influence rested upon them.

The Rev. Robert Alder preached on the evening of the first day of the Conference, and the Revs. Dr. Bunting and Robert Newton on the following Sabbath. An evening was devoted to a missionary meeting in reference more particularly to the erection of school-houses in the West Indies; the Rev. Edward Frazer gave a very interesting account of the progress of religious education among the recently enslaved population, and at the close a liberal collection was made. The simple, unaffected, and touching address of John Sunday was also listened to, by a large congregation, with great attention and interest. Amongst the rest, the account he gave of his conversion made a deep impression. He said, "Wandered in woods till twenty-nine years of age. Suffer much—no peace, no happy, no comfort there. Twelve years ago take fire-water. Big; oh, very big! In the morning very small. Well, man said two Indians could tell me everything of God, who made everything. So went away to where the Indians were who tell about God, and say me will no more go home till hear about God. Thought white people and Indians go different places, because different languages. Peter Jones say, 'One God made everything. Only two ways we go when die. One way for Indians and white people. Broad way lead to hell. There all bad people go. Narrow way where all good people go. If white man drunk and bad, go in broad way, he go to hell. If white man good, and go in narrow way, he go to where God is. If Indian be drunk and bad, go in broad way, he go to hell. If Indian good, and go in narrow way, he go where God is.' Now this word came to my heart. Gospel make me very small. Saw fine warriors lie dead; look at them and not cry. But when hear Gospel me cry, cry like old woman. Put down head, shame look round, because me cry. Great sinner in broad way. Indians said me not mind, they not mind what Peter say. Me get more fire-water; but me say won't do for me. So go to wigwam, and think about these two ways all day long. All laugh at me, but me don't care. Went every morning in the woods to pray. Went to Indians, and tell them about these two ways. Some like it, others not like it. Drink no fire-water then. Great trouble all the time. Not know what do. No one tell me. Went to Indian and say, Tell Peter Jones come down again. Missionary preach in the evening, and say, 'If any here great sinner, and

turn from wicked ways, God will have mercy on that man.' This great ease my mind. 'Bout a week again, lovefeast in barn. Put bread on plate, bowl water; take piece, but not swallow down, so great sinner. Morning went to meeting. Peter say, 'Lift up heart to God;' but thought how can me lift heart to God? Take it out. Lift right out. Then me die. But do anything to get peace. Me cry, 'O Lord, have mercy on me,' and cry, and God pour His Spirit on me. People not see it, but me feel it. Shout like a York. Yorkshireman in England shout and clap hands. Me shout and clap hands. Think me very light. Could run very fast. First born in woods forty-one years ago. Second born twelve years ago—born twice. Make me very happy. Seem everything new. Look at bay, look at trees, look at sky—all new, all glad. People ask me where Indian dress. Had cloth here, tomahawk, feathers, but what use old cloth and old feathers? Fire-water gone, wigwam gone—old things passed away, all things become new."

On the Sunday after the Conference closed, the Rev. Robert Newton preached the anniversary sermon in Abbey street chapel, Dublin; and on the following day the annual meeting of the Hibernian Wesleyan Missionary Society was held in the large room of the Rotundo, which was crowded. The chair was taken by Sergeant Jackson, who, at the close of John Sunday's address, said, "I never was so edified, and never saw such proof of the power of the Gospel as I have to-day, in listening to the statements of him whom I will take the liberty of calling my brother," and stepping forward, took the hand of the Indian chief, shook it warmly, and expressed his great gratification in meeting him as a Christian minister and brother. The effect was thrilling, and never could be forgotten by those who were present.

Shortly after the meeting of the New Connexion Conference in England, the Missionary Committee decided on extending its operations to Dublin, and appointed Mr. M'Clure to carry out this arrangement. In this new field he was unable to find one of his father's old friends, and found considerable difficulty in securing a suitable place for religious services, but at length got a place in Aungier street, which had accommodation for about two hundred persons. This was opened on September 3rd, and

soon a small Society was formed. Mr. M'Clure entered heartily into Temperance work in the metropolis. On August 30th a great *soirée* was held in the Rotundo, which was densely filled. Lord Cloncurry took the chair, and gave a good opening address; but the speech of the evening was delivered by the Rev. William Cooke.

As the Rev. Jeremiah Wilson returned from Conference, he called at Moira, was requested to preach, and did so. Next morning, as he was about to leave, the minister in charge called to see him, and said, "You cannot go to-day; two or three persons have been led to inquire what they must do to be saved, and one of them has an impression that if you stay for to-night she will obtain peace." According to her faith it was done unto her. Mr. Wilson remained in the town for four or five days, preaching each night, and during that time forty persons professed to have received the saving grace of Christ. One of these was a backslider who had fallen through drink, and another subsequently became a minister of the Methodist New Connexion.* Dr. Lynn happened to come to the neighbourhood, and rendered valuable aid at these services.

The Revs. William Reilly, Fossey Tackaberry, and George Grant were stationed in Belfast, and seldom, if ever, has an appointment to that town been more acknowledged and blessed of God. Concerning Mr. Reilly we have already written. Mr. Tackaberry was a born evangelist. Although his expositions of Divine truth were sound and thoughtful, his chief strength lay in moving the passions and grappling with the conscience, so that his appeals were often attended with extraordinary effect. Warm, impulsive, and never losing sight of his great aim, few heard him, especially for the first time, without being deeply affected. One of the severest critics amongst his hearers said, "It was hard to see the faults of his sermons, for one's eyes were blinded with tears." He lived near to God, being pre-eminently a man of prayer, and one who received many marked answers, in the literal sense of the word—intimations or intuitions, by which he was made aware of the result. Thus a young gentleman in the town laboured under a disease which had assumed symptoms usually considered fatal, and four surgeons had shaken

* Lynn's Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, p. 208.

their heads, to indicate the case hopeless. A friend asked Mr. Tackaberry to visit him, she being anxious about his fitness for approaching death; and as soon as possible after the visit had been paid, called to inquire what opinion the minister had formed about the spiritual state of the invalid. But Mr. Tackaberry began to tell how much he had been struck with him, that he had seldom met such an interesting young man, and that he could not think he was going to die. "Why?" inquired the lady. "Well, dear," he replied, "perhaps I thought he would live because I wished it." Then with great energy he added, "I couldn't *let* him die." The young man afterwards stated that Mr. Tackaberry had been the first to give him either the hope or the wish to live, and that when he rose from prayer he took his hand and said, "I think you will outlive the doctors yet." It is a remarkable fact that not only did he recover and live for several years, but that the four surgeons all died before him. Mr. Tackaberry never appeared to greater advantage than when he preached in the open air. There he stood, of a noble, commanding appearance, with fine, bold forehead, raven locks, large black eyes, a countenance radiant with the light of the sanctuary, and a soul "pregnant with celestial fire," while thrilling appeals sounded from his lips, piercing the hearts of sinners, as he besought them to be reconciled to God.

Mr. Grant was "a simple-minded, pure-hearted, lively, loving, happy spirit," distinguished for deep spirituality, disinterestedness, and intense devotion to God and His work. His sermons were solid and clear expositions of Scripture truth, and the composition indicated his superior taste and classical attainments, while he continually endeavoured to lead to his Saviour "the sheep for whom their Shepherd died."

Mr. Tackaberry thus describes the state of the circuit soon after his arrival: "We have here sixty-seven classes, containing more than nine hundred members, and a great many outposts. The circuit horse was sold in June, and my oak-stick is likely all the substitute we shall have. This gives us a great deal of wearing labour. One week in three is called the town, another the vicinity, and the third the country week. This is my vicinity week; and last evening I went more than three miles, preached to six people, and then had the comfort of walking home. I

must not complain, for Mr. Reilly and Mr. Grant do the same. We have a good, not a rich Society. Several of the leaders are right hearty men and right hearty revivalists. On Sunday we had a field-meeting, half a mile out of town, and about sixteen hundred were present. Our people ardently hope for a revival, and the leaders are pushing us with both hands. We have penitent meetings in the different chapels, and I think we shall have a burst." A month later he writes, "Everywhere I turn I find our people hope for a revival. This is encouraging; for when looked for, it is always prayed for and expected. Indeed, we have the commencement of it already. Our Society is in a good state, and would have been better but for the discussions occasioned by the building of Frederick street chapel."

The Revs. Henry Price and Robinson Scott were appointed for a second year to the Londonderry circuit, where a remarkable religious awakening took place. The servants of God saw that they had no common difficulties to contend with on their sphere of labour; but believing that the most effectual way to heal offences, to promote peace and concord, and to secure prosperity in every department of the work was to obtain an effusion of the Holy Spirit, and that such a copious visitation would be vouchsafed in answer to earnest and believing prayer, they set apart one day in each week for fasting and prayer to obtain the promised blessing. Nor were they disappointed, as the droppings of a shower soon began to descend, and sinners were awakened and converted under the word preached. When the ministers had been engaged in their exercises for some weeks the leaders joined them, and then their prayers were even more signally answered. On one occasion, as Mr. Scott preached in the country, the Holy Ghost fell on the people present, the cries of penitents arose, and at that meeting fourteen professed to have obtained the pardoning mercy of God. The work spread rapidly over the entire circuit. At the September lovefeast in Londonderry Mr. Price related what the Lord had been doing on the country part of the circuit, and inquired what there was to prevent a similar work in the city, inviting any who felt their need of salvation to manifest their desire by kneeling at the communion rails. One after another responded to the invitation, and thus a work began which continued for seven months, and was

so wide-spread that on one occasion there were no less than three hundred penitents pleading for Heaven's mercy. One feature in connection with this blessed work deserves special notice—the awakenings and conversions in general took place through the ministry of the word, the Divinely appointed instrument for the conversion of the world, and, as might be expected, those thus brought to God were steadfast and immovable, none of the converts having been known to return to the world and folly. The membership was increased from two hundred and seventy-five to four hundred.

The Revs. James Lynch and Robert J. Meyer were stationed on the Ballyshannon and Pettigo circuit, where they were favoured with much spiritual prosperity. The young preacher was received by his superintendent with great affection, assured of the many prayers that had been offered on his behalf, and given suitable directions with regard to his work. The congregations to which he ministered, although in general consisting of poor people, were large and earnest. Many of the young people, having to cross broad and rapid streams, came without shoes or stockings, but with long poles to assist them in fording the rivers. In all the farm-houses trumpets or cows' horns were used to call the people together, and when leaving on the dark nights each family group lit a piece of bog-wood or lump of turf, that was held aloft to give them light. Methodism had a good position in Pettigo, and included amongst its supporters Mr. George Smyth, sen., a Christian gentleman of superior intelligence and integrity. Mrs. Smyth was "a mother in Israel." Their three sons, who were married and in business for themselves, not only inherited the noble generosity of their parents, but added thereto their personal choice—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Pettigo, however, soon became too strait for the superior ability and increasing claims of these brothers, so two of them removed to Belfast, and were there heartily identified with the Society. In Pettigo there were also the M'Creas and M'Cutcheons—standard-bearers in the Methodist host. On the quarterly lovefeast day large contingents came in from the surrounding country, and it was surely "a holy convocation." Such leaders as Matthew Kyle, James Stewart, and Jack Funston, with others, were men of great ability and deep and fervent piety. During the year the

old preaching-house was pulled down and a new one erected on the site, the services meanwhile being held in a large barn of Mr. Smyth's, where the old pulpit and seats were turned to good account. This humble sanctuary became the birthplace of many souls, memorably so on one lovefeast occasion. Numbers were led to cry for mercy and to rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free.* The new chapel was opened by the Rev. Thomas W. Doolittle.

It was at this period that the mind of Joseph W. M'Kay was directed to the work of the ministry, and his career of public usefulness began. Carrickmacross was not an inviting sphere for a young man anxious to enter on Christian work. In the barony of Farney there was little Protestantism, and the Methodists were few and uninfluential; but he was not deterred by these circumstances. The Revs. Henry Deery and James Tobias were then on the Drogheda circuit, and visited the town. From the latter M'Kay received appointment and certificate as a local preacher; and when afterwards conducting business for the sub-agent of the Shirley estate, he employed his Sundays in the town and neighbourhood, preaching and holding meetings in school-houses and private residences, and in the court-house, to which he had free access. Those who attended his occasional services in the neighbourhood were impressed by the earnestness and ability of the young preacher, then only in the nineteenth year of his age. At the request of a number of Scotchmen, who were employed in the erection of Loughfea Castle, and some other Presbyterians belonging to the old congregation at Carrickmaclim (then without a minister), he went regularly two miles every Sabbath to preach to them at noon; and when he left the neighbourhood they presented him with a copy of Clarke's Commentary, as a mark of their fraternal regard and esteem for his character and ardent endeavours to promote their spiritual interests.

The young man appointed to the Dundalk and Castleblayney circuit having yielded to discouragement, and resolved to return home, the aged and devoted William Hamilton wrote to him as follows: "My dear Brother,—Last night I heard that you have thought of grounding your arms. That is to me a good sign.

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 849.

The devil is afraid of you, and wishes you to go home. If you would, all the devils in hell would set up a shout and say, 'See how we chased him off his station.' Forbid it, Lord! My first circuit was Brookeborough. I had not gone twice round till I met the devil, who told me (what was very true) that I was a weak and useless creature, and that it was a shame to impose upon the people by sending such a novice among them. I believed all he said, and off I ran, till I was half-way home, and met a good woman, who asked me where I was going. I told her. She said it was the devil who was hunting me, and turned me back to the work, saying it was like what the devil would do. When William Douglas came to me in Sligo he took the same disorder, began to cry one day, said he was not fit for the work, and should go home. I thought of the Brookeborough devil, hooted him out of it, dried up the young man's tears, encouraged him, and he has done very well ever since. 'Tis a shame to be cowardly. Take courage, and draw your sword like a man, be it long or short, sharp or blunt, and make a flourish, as if you were not afraid, and you'll frighten the fiend to his own hell. If all the preachers in the Connexion would look at themselves more than at their Helper, we might all go home.—William Hamilton, an old soldier, to Brother Baskin, a young recruit." *

From Sunday morning, August 27th, until Thursday, September 21st, Gideon Ouseley says he was enabled to preach fifty-four times in and out of doors. At Mountmellick, during a short visit, he preached seven times, and writes that he had not had so blessed a season for a long time. Between thirty and forty persons came forward to the rails, and with tears gave in their names to meet in class. At Roscrea his friends were terrified when he resolved to take the street, and they did not accompany him, yet he went and preached, and returned in safety. Borrisokane he found much altered by the hand of death. In October he declares he is safe and well, except a wound from the kick of a horse, as he passed through Maryborough. Though it was painful, it did not hinder him persevering in his work, as he continued to preach in and out of doors as usual. In the following month he tells how a pressing invitation from the Tullamore preachers, Messrs. Crook and Cather, had brought him again to

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1870, p. 27.

Mountmellick, where he rejoiced in the prosperity of the work. Here he preached on Sunday morning, December 24th, and in the course of his sermon gave an account of his religious experience, which made a profound impression on the mind of a young Scotchman, John Hay, who was present and brought under deep and protracted distress about his soul.

The Rev. Adam Averell was engaged chiefly in excursions to several parts of the north, in arranging which he was guided by calls to open new preaching-houses. On August 13th he opened one at Killyleagh; on September 17th, one at Derrygonnelly; and on October 8th, one at Emyvale. Methodism was first introduced into Derrygonnelly by Mr. Adam Forde, who was then a local preacher in the neighbourhood, and obtained from the Messrs. Kitson the use of a mill, in which the people assembled to hear the word of life. Shortly after 1817, when Mr. Forde entered the itinerancy, a preaching-house with a thatched roof was erected. Plain and humble as this building was, hundreds were born of God within its walls, and multitudes could say that it was to them "the house of God and the gate of heaven." In 1835 this house was burned, whether by accident or through malice could never be ascertained, but there were strong suspicions of the latter. The use of the market-house was then kindly granted to the congregation, another site secured, and the above substantial house built.

Mr. Thomas C. Maguire was appointed to Turlough, which embraced a wide field, including Foxford, Cappavicar, Rahans, Newport, Knappagh, and Westport, with occasional visits to Ballina and Killala. In several of these places there were encouraging congregations and times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. In one place there was a wonderful movement amongst the Romanists. They attended in hundreds, week after week, to hear the word preached, and numbers gladly received the truth, obtained copies of the Scriptures, and believed with a heart unto righteousness. But persecution arose, and they were obliged, in self-protection, to leave for America. One Sunday evening, as Mr. Maguire rode to a preaching appointment, a large number of men who were playing foot-ball blocked the road to prevent his proceeding on his journey. He spoke kindly to them, but they, instead of allowing him to pass on, sang a song called

"The Swaddler," giving a caricature of a Methodist preacher. When they had done the missionary said, "Now, boys, you have done that well. Tell me who commenced it, that I may give him a book as a reward for it." When they declined to give any name he offered a tract to each of them, which some of them took, all quietly dispersed, and the servant of God received no more annoyance in that quarter. An old woman who attended the Methodist services having died, and Mr. Maguire knowing that there would be a large concourse of people at her wake, asked permission to preach there, but this the relatives were afraid to grant, so he resolved to attend on his own responsibility, and see what, with the Divine blessing, he could do. The house was crowded, vile songs were sung, and games were played, not a few of which were a disgrace to humanity. At length the missionary asked permission to sing. "Yes, to be sure," replied several voices; "why not?" So he sang the hymn beginning, "The King of kings a warrant sealed." The people listened to the thirteen verses attentively, and then loudly applauded. A second, and then a third hymn were also well received. As it was by this time twelve o'clock, and a Saturday night, Mr. Maguire said, "My dear friends, you have been amusing yourselves for a good while. It is now Sunday morning. We are here in the presence of death, and as we all must die, let us be a little more serious." Then taking out his Bible, he added, "I shall read a nice story for you," and selected the visit of the angel to the Virgin Mary. They listened with wonder and delight to the narrative and its exposition, many a sigh was heard, and not a few wept freely. The servant of God then closed with prayer, and left amidst the thanks and good wishes of his hearers.

CHAPTER XIX.

1838.

The Rev. Adam Averell writes, on January 11th, 1838, "We are blessed with revivals in many places. I heard a few days ago that there have been at least two hundred persons converted to God on the Enniskillen circuit since the Conference; and I had a letter this day from Newry, pressing me to go to a missionary meeting there, to witness a blessed revival of the work of God in that town." In the former religious awakening the Wesleyan Methodists appear to have shared to some extent as well as the Primitive Wesleyans. Amongst those converted at this period in Enniskillen were Robert Johnson of Currin and Robert Johnston of Ardbarren, who each subsequently entered the itinerancy.

On January 12th a public breakfast-meeting of the members and friends of the Wesleyan Society was held in the school-room, Watergate place, Bandon. One hundred and twenty-five persons were present, the Rev. Thomas Waugh presided, and the spiritual and financial state of the cause was considered. This was apparently the first public breakfast in the town. A little circumstance at this period led to funeral services in Bandon being conducted by Methodist ministers. A daughter of Mrs. William Kingston having died, and notice of the interment having been given to the rector of Kilbrogan, the friends who attended the funeral were kept waiting in the church for about half an hour, without any clergyman putting in an appearance. At length it was proposed that Mr. Waugh, who was present, should read the usual prayers, and he at once consented. The rector subsequently called on Mrs. Kingston and apologized for his forgetfulness; but she said she was glad that the Methodist minister had conducted the service, and that it was the way in which she would be buried.

At Kilkenny a chapel was erected chiefly through the Divine

blessing on the persevering efforts of the Rev. James Sullivan. The first preaching-house in this city, built in 1771, was superseded in 1802 by another in William street, and that now by one still larger and more comfortable in Wesley place. The history of this edifice is remarkable, showing that the Society in Kilkenny had other unfriendly influences to contend with than mob violence. In March, 1836, the Rev. William Stewart writes, "I am greatly puzzled about the Kilkenny business, but cannot dismiss the idea of giving up the ground. It is very discouraging, I admit, and we must work in faith. But if something beyond what can be done on the mission to which it is attached be not allowed, it is a hopeless case. Fifty pounds is as much as we could hope to raise on the mission, and if I had liberty, perhaps I could muster one hundred pounds, which would still leave us far behind." Three months later the Rev. Peter Roe, rector of the parish, applied to the Conference to sell to him the plot of ground which had been secured as a site for the new chapel, promising to try and secure another site equally eligible. When, however, Mr. Sullivan requested to see what was proposed to be given in exchange, Mr. Roe took him to a street in Irishtown, in which cast-off clothes and the like were exposed for sale, and pointing to a vacant place, said, "There is a quiet, retired situation in which to build." Mr. Sullivan, regarding this as an attempt to buy the Methodists out of the parish, declined the offer, proceeded with the chapel, and added a comfortable manse.

The leave of Conference having been obtained for its erection, on Sunday, May 13th, a neat and commodious Methodist chapel was opened at Drumkeeran by the Rev. Thomas W. Doolittle. He is said to have preached two appropriate and impressive sermons, to large and highly appreciative audiences.

All parts of the Ballyshannon and Pettigo circuit shared in a very gracious revival. At Carricknahorna, especially, many witnesses were raised up to testify that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins. The last lovefeast on the circuit, for the year, held at Ballintra, was attended by a large number of people, and the Rev. James Lynch preached a sermon rich in Evangelical truth, accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. The glory of God filled the place, while more than twenty persons professed to have obtained peace in believing. One girl, with an almost

angelic countenance, stood up, lifted her hands and exclaimed, "O Lamb of God, was ever pain, was ever love like Thine?" Then a young woman who had just been enabled to rest on the Saviour cried out, "Where is my mother? where is my mother?" and soon mother and daughter rejoiced together as they that divide the spoil.* Thus witness after witness of the power of Christ to save was raised up.

The missionary anniversary services were invested with unwonted interest. The Revs. Barnabas Shaw and John Anderson were the deputation to the south. Mr. Shaw's details with reference to South Africa and its missions were intensely interesting, while the eloquent addresses of his brother deputation were also listened to with great delight.

The Rev. James Dixon was appointed to the north. This was his first visit to Ireland, and he made a deep and powerful impression in Belfast, Portadown, Lurgan, and other places, where his speeches are still spoken of by some of the older members. He seems to have been surprised at the general absence of apparent feeling among so excitable a people as the Irish are reported to be. "They listen," he says, "with profound attention, but manifest little or no emotion. I shall return full of admiration of the Irish character. I believe a better set of men does not exist on earth than the Irish Methodist preachers." Although he was in the most Protestant part of the kingdom, he saw clearly the influence of Popery, and therefore writes concerning it, "It hangs like a millstone on the neck of the poor people, and is, I should think, the most unmitigated system of oppression, tyranny, and evil that ever existed in the world."

A gracious wave of revival blessing passed over the Lisleen end of what was then the Strabane circuit. The Revs. Michael Burrows and Robert Hamilton 1st were the circuit ministers, and they were ably assisted by a devoted band of leaders and local preachers. Night after night, weeping penitents sought and found the Saviour, the June lovefeast at Lisleen being especially notable for the sense of the presence and power of God which rested on the people. Amongst those converted were several members of the family of the Rev. William Finlay, then stationed at Killashandra. One of his daughters, in writing to

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 849.

him, describes the religious awakening which she had both witnessed and experienced, and mentions the names of at least thirty persons who had been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. "But," she adds, "what is best for you to know is that my dear sister Rosanna, my brother Samuel, and I have found peace with God." These two interesting and promising sisters, however, within a little more than three years, passed in holy triumph to the home above.

While thus the Wesleyan Methodists in this neighbourhood were refreshed from on high, the Primitive Wesleyans were not left "unwatered and dry." Their preachers were Messrs. William Beatty and John G. Wakeham, and they were well sustained by the leaders. The first indication of a good work amongst them was during a service at Ardbarren; but still more abundant blessings were poured out on the following day, at a lovefeast at Aghnahoo. Amongst those then led to religious decision were John Johnston of Ardbarren and Mrs. Sproule of Castlederg. The good work spread until there were eighty members in the Aghnahoo class, and sixty in those at Castlederg and Ardbarren.

Miss Lutton, who had recently settled in England, paid a visit to Ireland, and during the few weeks of her stay partially renewed her evangelistic labours. One of the places in which she held meetings was Tullamore, where the Rev. William Cather, as he had done ten years previously in Omagh, acted as doorkeeper; but as the chapel was so situated that persons outside could hear almost as well as those inside, he did not prevent several of his own sex from availing themselves of this, to them, rare opportunity. A gracious revival subsequently took place in the town, to which he considered Miss Lutton's labours had contributed much. The gentlemen, however, were not so successful at a meeting which she held in the neighbourhood of Moira. During the first part of the service a noise was heard, which it appeared afterwards was made, as she herself says, by "three Methodist villains, young men, in the very act of stealing all they could of the prayer, and from care to elude detection, evidently intended to purloin what was to follow." But the young gentleman on guard discovered them, and ordered them out. In vain they coaxed and pleaded to be allowed to remain, for out they had to go.

Mr. William M'Connell of Belfast had intended to give a subscription towards the erection of a chapel on the north side of the town, but not approving of the site selected, he applied the money to the building of a preaching-house on the south side, at what was called the Lisburn turnpike, but is now known as Wesley place. It was opened by the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry on May 27th, and although it afforded accommodation for only two or three hundred persons, about four hundred squeezed into it, while nearly as many more stood outside, to whom one of the local preachers ministered. For this generous gift, which cost £450, Mr. M'Connell subsequently received the thanks of the Conference. This was the eighth Methodist chapel erected in Belfast.

Of the missions of the New Connexion, the Rev. William Cooke writes that the prospects were exceedingly bright. There was an increase of more than three hundred members, besides many on trial. A spirit of peace, increasing piety, and zeal characterized both ministers and members, and numerous places called for help that could not be attended to. Soon afterwards an excellent chapel was erected in York street, Belfast, and was opened by two ministers from England, the collections amounting to £60. This sum was supplemented subsequently by the proceeds of a bazaar—apparently the first attempt in Ireland to raise money for religious purposes in this way, but it was not successful.

During the six years which had now elapsed since the introduction of Primitive Methodism into Ireland, several excellent brethren, including Messrs. William Bickerdike and Philip Pugh, had laboured hard on their respective missions, and endured severe privations and hardships through the poverty of their people; and though much good was effected through the Divine blessing on their self-denying toil, the Societies continued in general small and feeble. During the time of Mr. Bickerdike in Belfast, the landlord of their premises in Rea's court required possession, and therefore the Society removed to Harper's court. While here, the Rev. Philip Pugh was sent from England to the town, and Mr. John Stewart, a local preacher, was received into the itinerancy. Carrickfergus also was opened as a branch mission, and a small chapel erected in the Scotch quarter. After a short stay in Harper's court, Belfast, the Society removed to a seminary in Curtis street, and from thence to the Cotton court chapel,

formerly held by the Wesleyans, until 1838, when a preaching-house was erected in Melbourne street, the tenth Methodist chapel built in Belfast. Six years later a minister's residence was erected in connection with this edifice.

Messrs. Samuel Larminie and James Robinson, jun., were appointed by the Primitive Wesleyan Conference to the Ballyshannon circuit, where they were cheered with an extensive and gracious religious awakening. During a quarterly lovefeast at Ballintra the Holy Spirit was poured out on the people, and thirteen persons were awakened to deep spiritual concern, some of whom were made very happy in the love of Christ, and others returned to their homes deeply wounded by the Spirit's sword. The leaders were greatly stirred up, and thus the good work began. The next lovefeast in the town continued from eleven o'clock in the forenoon until eight in the evening, and during it thirty-four persons were turned from darkness to light; the revival then spread over the whole circuit, including Donegal, Ballyshannon, Belleek, Portnason, and many other places. At the close of the year it was found the membership had increased from six hundred and eighty-six to nine hundred and six, and three hundred souls had been converted, of whom at the end of twelve months not one had returned to sin and Satan.*

The members of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on June 27th. Abraham Dawson was received as having travelled twelve months; and five candidates were admitted on trial, including George Hamilton of the Enniskillen circuit, Robert Kingsborough of the Tanderagee circuit, William Stokes of the Cookstown mission, and Guy Cunningham of Trillick. There was one death reported, that of James Ransom, whose life and end showed that for him to live was Christ and to die was gain. Two hundred and thirty-four additional members were returned, which was accepted as a cheering token of the blessing of the Lord of the harvest on the labours of His servants.

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference was held in Dublin, and began on June 22nd, upwards of eighty ministers being present. The Rev. Edmund Grindrod presided, and was accompanied by the Revs. Robert Newton and Elijah Hoole. The Rev. Gideon Ouseley was elected, by seniority, a member of the Legal Hundred

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1864, p. 86.

in the place of the Rev. Andrew Hamilton, jun., superannuated, and the Rev. John F. Mathews by ballot instead of the Rev. Charles Mayne, deceased. James Black of Dromara was received as having travelled one year, and Robert Hewitt, who had during the previous five years acted as a hired local preacher on the Boyle, Clones, Cootehill, Downpatrick, and Bandon circuits, Robert Bell of the Kilrush mission, Gibson M'Millen, who had been labouring on the Magherafelt circuit, John Walker, and John Donald were admitted on trial. Four preachers, it was reported, had died during the year—George Stephenson, Charles Mayne, and Francis Russell, who were veterans in the work, and Armstrong Halliday of Coleraine, who was in the fourth year of his itinerancy; but all died well, giving a clear testimony to the truth and blessedness of the religion they had recommended in life. There was a small increase in all the funds; and though the Society had sustained a loss of three hundred and forty-eight members by emigration, there were two hundred and twenty-one more than in the previous year.

The public services in connection with the Conference were largely attended and most profitable, the interest being much increased by the presence of Kahkequomaby, or Peter Jones, an Indian chief from North America, who had been converted through the Divine blessing on the labours of Edmund Stoney, a spiritual child of the Rev. William Reilly, and who therefore pleasantly called the Irish Methodist minister his grandfather. On Sunday, June 24th, the Rev. Robert Newton preached in Abbey street chapel, on "Thy kingdom come;" the congregation included the Lord Mayor, High Sheriff, and other civic officers, in state, and the collection amounted to £100. On the following evening Peter Jones preached in Whitefriar street chapel, on Psalm lxvi. 16, which he expounded by a touching history of his own conversion and religious experience. The congregation was much moved, when he illustrated his flight into the backwoods for prayer, by the stricken deer retiring to bleed in secret, and lying down first on one side, and then on the other, to obtain relief. On Thursday he preached again in Abbey street chapel, on 2 Corinthians x. 4, 5. Judge Crampton was one of his hearers, and handed him a good subscription. On Monday, July 2nd, the annual meeting of the Hibernian Mis-

sionary Society was held in the Rotundo; the large room was crowded, the Lord Mayor took the chair, and very able and effective addresses were delivered by the President, the Rev. Robert Newton, Peter Jones, and others.

The Hon. Baron Foster having sent Miss Moran, then a governess in his family, with a request to Peter Jones to visit him, promising him a subscription, the Indian chief at once complied, and was received most cordially. The Judge made most particular inquiries as to his design in visiting this country, and then asked, "Have you had success?" "Oh, yes," replied Peter Jones. "Judge Crampton gave me £10 for my schools, and £10 for the General Mission Fund." It was a palpable hint, and was kindly taken. "I cannot follow a better example" said Baron Foster, and handed him a cheque for £20. The chief asked permission, before leaving, to engage in prayer, and it was promptly given. "Oh, the solemnity," says one who was present, "and the tenderness of feeling and language with which he implored the Great Spirit that as we should never see each other's faces again in this world, he might see his kind benefactor, with all his family, at the right hand of the Judge of quick and dead! It was a season of grace never to be forgotten. The tears stood in the Judge's eyes as he accompanied the chief to the door and uttered a last farewell." Miss Moran, seeing that a favourable impression had been made on the mind of Baron Foster, seized a suitable opportunity of requesting him to become an annual subscriber to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and he consented, giving instructions to his banker to pay £10 a year to the Fund until counter-ordered, and the counter-order was never given by him.

A debt of £200 having remained on the chapel in Bandon, a special effort was now made to remove it. Mr. Waugh preached on behalf of this object on Sunday, December 9th, and promised to procure £100 if the Society and congregation would raise the other half. The collections amounted to upwards of £91, which, with a balance in the hands of the treasurer, Mr. Thomas Bennett, sen., made up the required amount, and thus the debt was cleared off. By a singular coincidence, the chapel was on the evening of this day, for the first time, lighted with gas, much to the comfort and satisfaction of all present.

Mr. Ouseley, on October 3rd, writes from Tarbert thus: "I have just returned from Tralee and its vicinity, where I laboured for nine days, preached seventeen sermons, and travelled about one hundred and thirty Irish miles. The congregations were generally very large, in Tralee especially uncommonly so. Our good brother Meredith, cast down as he was, being there alone, was greatly comforted and encouraged, and I was much blessed in my own soul. We had on one Sabbath a blessed lovefeast, and on another the Lord's Supper. In Kilrush, too, I had good seasons and large congregations. I spent two days in Limerick city, preached four times, and had crowded congregations. In the country also I had crowds to hear. The Lord strengthens me, so that I am seldom or ever weary. I must set out on Friday to Ballinasloe, to meet brother Lindsay there."* Thus, although in his seventy-seventh year and approaching the close of his noble career, this prince of missionaries seemed insensible to any decay of his physical strength or mental energy.

One evening the class at Urraghry, near Ballinasloe, was met by the Rev. William Starkey for the renewal of tickets. Frederick Elliott, who had been earnestly seeking the blessings of salvation, was present, and the preacher said to him, "Frederick, you believe Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?" "I do, sir." "That He died on the cross to save them?" "I do." "That He is able and willing to save you?" "Yes, sir." "Come now, brother, can you believe that He saves you now?" "I believe He will save me some time, but I cannot believe He saves me now." "There, my young brother, is where your faith is defective," said Mr. Starkey. "To believe that God will save you at some future time will not bring salvation to your soul; it is a delusion. You must believe that He, for Christ's sake, saves you now, and the moment you so believe it shall be done in you. Now try." "Lord," said the anxious youth, "if this is the faith that saves, I can believe." That moment the peace and love of God flowed into his soul, and he went home rejoicing in the Lord his Saviour. At the succeeding lovefeast in Ballinasloe young Elliott, amid great and universal joy, narrated what the Lord had done for him, and it proved the beginning of a blessed and extensive religious awakening.

* Reilly's Memorial, p. 305.

The young convert began to work for Christ, speaking personally to the ungodly, and holding meetings, frequently in places never before visited by a Methodist, and soon one and then another were converted to God. Amongst those thus won for Christ were several cousins, including Thomas Walsh of Attibrassil, James and Frederick Elliott, and two brothers and three sisters of the Walshes of Mackney. The parents of the last-mentioned, seeing such a change in their children, were much impressed, and observing the girls retire to the dairy every day, Mrs. Walsh followed them to the door, heard them pray most earnestly, and immediately thought, "My children are praying and urging their way to heaven, and I am careless and godless, not fit to die." Thus she was awakened to religious concern, then, through her influence, her husband, and then both obtained peace in believing. They thus became indeed a happy family, united in Christ, and opened their house for the preaching of the word, the entertainment of the ministers, and for a Sunday-school, which proved the means of much and lasting good.*

The Rev. Robert Huston had been now more than twelve months on the Dundalk and Castleblayney circuit, and his labours were much blessed. Although the chapel in the principal town was unfavourably situated, yet the Lord made bare His arm there in the salvation of souls. One of those thus won for Christ was James Carey, a nephew of the Rev. John Carey. He writes to Mr. Huston thus: "I can never forget the December lovefeast of 1838, in the old chapel of Dundalk, when as a broken-hearted sinner I fell before the mercy-seat and heard you say, 'Your uncle's God is yours.' That day, while one of the leaders was engaged in prayer and referred to Jesus as dying on the cross for sinners, I believed He died for me; my chains fell off, my guilt and gloom were gone, and with a glad heart and free I praised my merciful God." While on this circuit, Mr. Huston got a chapel erected at Crossmaglen. He also waited on the Earl of Roden, obtained from him, at a nominal rent, the grant of a plot of ground in Dundalk for the erection of a new chapel and residence, collected some hundreds of pounds, and saw the project fairly started, notwithstanding much difficulty and not a few discouragements.

* Unpublished Autobiographical Sketch by Rev. Frederick Elliott.

The Revs. Jeremiah Wilson and Robert J. Meyer were stationed at Magherafelt, which two years previously had been formed into a circuit, embracing a very extensive district of country. At Castledawson the services were held in the house of Mr. James Morrow, but in less than six months an attractive chapel was built. An obelisk stood on the ground, and was turned to good account, the base forming a porch, and the shaft a sort of spire, which soon afterwards was blown down. The opening services were conducted by the Revs. Henry Price and William A. Darby, while Mr. Morrow had an abundant provision and cordial welcome for friends from far and near. On the following Sunday Mr. Meyer occupied the pulpit, which he did with fear and trembling, but the Lord graciously helped His young servant. At the close, as the congregation rose to leave, a young woman cried out, "Glory to God, my sins are forgiven! I am now a child of God." The effect was electrical. The preacher gave out the doxology, the people remained, and a good prayer-meeting was held, which proved the forerunner of seasons of still more abundant blessing. At Kilrea Jack M'Dougall still lived, but had ceased to make tubs, churns, and firkins, and had turned schoolmaster. He possessed a clear and vigorous intellect, great logical acumen, and a most tenacious memory. The great truths of the Gospel, which he so fully believed, he realized in his heart and exhibited in his life. The services were held in the school-room, and at their close a considerable number were wont to remain for conversations and discussions on Christian doctrines, evangelistic work, and religious experience. The Rev. Daniel Macafee said that for conversational powers he had known no such men in the ranks of Methodism as Jack M'Dougall of Kilrea and James Field of Cork.*

There were in Belfast several philanthropic institutions, supported by members of different Evangelical Churches, and affording encouraging fields for Christian effort. One was an asylum for fallen women in Cromac street, in which the Methodist ministers preached weekly, and thus a considerable number of these poor sinners were led to the Saviour. On one occasion especially, while the Rev. William Reilly preached, the Spirit of God descended in mighty power, and the cries of penitents were most heart-rending. Soon afterwards the preacher received an

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 888.

anonymous letter enclosing a small and beautiful token of grateful appreciation of good received then. Another of these institutions was an asylum for the deaf, dumb, and blind, in which a very touching incident occurred. A scarcity of Bibles with the raised letters having taken place, a young woman whose fingers, by wickerwork, had lost their sensitiveness of touch, was required by the committee to give up her copy until a fresh supply could be obtained. She expressed great unwillingness to part with it, and with uplifted face and streaming eyes raised the book to kiss it. But lo! when her mouth touched the page she discovered, to her unutterable surprise and delight, that her lips possessed the same susceptibility that her fingers formerly had, and that thus she could once more converse with God. Of course under these circumstances she was not deprived of her precious treasure.

Holywood was a small village, with one church and one meeting-house; and the Primitive Wesleyans held their services in a large room over a public-house, being supplied with preachers from Belfast. Much success could not be expected in the midst of such surroundings, and accordingly arrangements were made for the erection of a chapel, which proved to be the scene of many and signal displays of Divine power.

CHAPTER XX.

1840.

Early in 1839 a terrible and destructive storm, of most unusual violence, passed over the country and did a vast amount of injury. What was called the preacher's house in Belfast then was scarcely worthy of the name. It stood at right angles with the chapel, was built of slender nine-inch walls, and the entrance faced a plot of ground on which were some large trees. One of these was torn up from the roots, blown round in a semicircle, and fell against the gable of the chapel. Had it fallen on the residence, it would have brought it to the ground. The Rev. George Grant and one of the children were unwell, or they would have taken refuge in the adjoining edifice. The Rev. William Reilly, overcome with fatigue after a hard day's work, fell fast asleep sitting in a most perilous part of the house, and when roused and warned of his danger, replied, "We are in good hands," and dropped off again. Many stronger buildings were that night levelled to the ground, while Providence spared this frail tenement; several friends, on the following morning, came to see the place, expecting to find it a heap of ruins. On examination, it was found that the thin walls in front had been connected with a sounder one in the rear, by two beams, and thus the building was held together and the lives of the inmates mercifully preserved.

The glorious career of Ireland's greatest evangelist now drew to a close. An internal disease, induced by excessive labour, had been gaining on him for years, and sometimes caused extreme suffering. Nothing, however, could repress his ardour or prevent his using what strength remained in the service of his Master. In January, Ouseley came to Dublin, and was attacked with great violence by a gang of robbers, who attempted to take his watch, but only succeeded in securing his bag, which contained little

of any value to them. The injuries received, however, aggravated his complaint and hastened his end. Immediately after this attack he visited the Rev. William G. Campbell, at Celbridge, who states that he laboured away as if nothing had happened. "Closing my seventy-seventh year," he says, writing about a fortnight before the last birthday he was to number among mortals, and praising his blessed Redeemer as he was wont—

"'Through waves, and clouds, and storms,
He gently cleared my way!'

Praises be to Him that sitteth upon the throne and maketh all things new. Amen and Amen! Oh, eternity, blissful eternity!—

"'Sin, earth, and hell I now defy;
I lean upon my Saviour's breast.'

God be thanked. Amen! The end will soon come. Joyful news!" On February 25th he writes, "Yesterday I began my seventy-eighth year, and a day of happiness it was to me, and to others too, I trust. To God be glory and praise for ever! I preached in Mountrath at ten o'clock, and met the class; after that I went to church, and heard a good sermon; I then went out, and preached in the open air to many, without interruption from any but one man, who again and again vociferated, 'I'll prove there is no hell, so I will.' Having ended my short sermon, I returned to Rushin, and after dinner preached to a nice congregation in the parlour; and after tea we started again for Mountrath, and I preached there at seven o'clock. The blessing of the Lord was with us through all, praise to Him for ever! Thus, having preached four times, met the class, and gone twice into the town, I was not even fatigued! Thank God, thank God, O my soul! Amen and Amen!" He returned to Dublin in the middle of April, preaching at Maryborough, on his way, five times on the Sunday and Monday. The two days following he spent at Mountmellick, and thus once more the Lord rejoiced His aged servant by the sight he loved above all things, that of souls pressing to the feet of the Saviour and into His fold. Having called upon those who were resolved to flee from the wrath to come to give in their names and join the Society, several came forward, and on writing each name, he solemnly repeated it, and said, "I write your name before God and the

Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." Then followed in each case a brief but earnest supplication, that God might write the name in the Lamb's Book of Life. The twenty persons thus enrolled were the last Ouseley gathered into the Methodist Society, and the few that heard him on the following morning heard his last sermon.

In the metropolis a short period of rest was enjoyed, then alarming symptoms set in, and the approach of death became evident; but it had no terrors to him. "I have no fear of death," was his dying exclamation. "The Spirit of God sustains me; God's Spirit is my support." Apparently these were the last words he ever uttered, and a little after the noonday of May 14th he entered into everlasting light. A few days afterwards the old Methodist chapel in Whitefriar street beheld an unusual solemnity, and presently men with full hearts stood round an open grave in Mount Jerome, and there returned to mother earth all that was now earthly of one of the best sons of Erin that the green sod ever covered.*

While thus God, in His providence, called hence an Irishman who had been one of the most efficient and successful missionaries at home, He raised up another who has done a noble work for Christ in other lands. William Butler, a young man of twenty, was at this period led to religious decision. In an unpublished letter, written by him to the Rev. Thomas Waugh, and dated February 20th, 1864, he says, "Within one short mile of Bray, on the road to St. Valere, God convinced me of sin twenty-five years ago, and there, beneath a tree on the road-side, I knelt down and offered the first extempore and sincere prayer that ever passed my lips." The young convert soon began to work for Christ. The Revs. William Crook and Edward M. Banks were on the Wexford circuit, where the Lord poured out His Spirit in convincing power, so that sinners were awakened and converted to God. This good work continued for months, and it was no uncommon thing on Sunday evenings for two or three or more to enter into Christian liberty. The revival, however, may be said to have culminated in a visit of young Butler, who was accompanied by a gentleman from England, and together they held a series of mission services, which were greatly owned of

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 287-96.

God. Referring to the Rev. William Crook at this time, the Rev. Dr. Butler says, "It was he first put a hymn-book into my hands in Wexford, he first put me to preach, he heard my first sermon, and feeble as it was, encouraged me. And now I write to his worthy son to say that if I have been of any use in the ministry in Ireland, in America, or in India, I owe it very much, under God, to the name you have the honour to bear." And again, in an address to the Irish Conference, the worthy doctor said, "James Lynch laid his hands on my youthful head, and from him I received the missionary spirit. Whatever success has resulted from the Divine blessing on my labours, I owe it to Irish Methodism."

As the first century of the history of Methodism approached a close, the thoughts of the Connexion were directed to the propriety and desirableness of celebrating the auspicious event in an appropriate manner. Accordingly a committee was formed in England, including in its members the Revs. Thomas Waugh and John F. Mathews, to make the necessary arrangements; and by it it was decided that Ireland should share in the celebration, and should receive £2,000 for the Chapel Fund, £6,000 for mission schools and school-houses, and £5,000 for the erection of a centenary monumental chapel in Dublin, in lieu of the house in Whitefriar street, the lease of which was nearly expired. The first meeting on this side of the Channel was held in Whitefriar street chapel, on the morning of February 27th. The President of the Conference, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, took the chair, and was supported by the Revs. Robert Newton, James Dixon, and Theophilus Lessey, and Messrs. S. H. Smith of Sheffield and Crook of Liverpool as a deputation. The Revs. Thomas Waugh, Matthew Tobias, and William Stewart, as well as many laymen, also took part in the meeting, which was most cheering in its spirit, speeches, and results, the amount subscribed being upwards of £5,000.

The services for the province of Ulster were held in Belfast on March 1st, when the deputation consisted of the President and the Revs. Robert Newton, Theophilus Lessey, George Marsden, and James Dixon, and A. G. Suter, Esq., of Halifax. A breakfast-meeting was held in the large room of the Commercial Buildings, at which about four hundred persons were present, including a large number of ministers. This meeting was adjourned to Donegal square chapel, where it was resumed at eleven o'clock,

and nearly one thousand persons assembled in that sacred edifice. But the crowning service was in the evening, in the Presbyterian meeting-house, May street, where, it was estimated, not less than two thousand two hundred met together. The whole current of the eloquent and powerful addresses delivered ran in the channel of high-toned Protestantism, loyalty to Methodism, and devotion to Christ, and about £2,800 was subscribed. Meetings were then held for the south at Cork and Bandon, not inferior to the Dublin and Belfast services either in efficiency or power, and at which subscriptions amounting to about £2,500 were subscribed. Subsequently meetings were held throughout the kingdom, attended by large audiences and addressed by Irish ministers and laymen, which brought up the total amount of subscriptions to the splendid sum of £14,519 9*s.* 4*d.*

From the first it has been a principle of the Methodist Connexion that the strong should assist the weak; and this principle has entered into every department of the system, and governed the administration of all its funds. It is not, therefore, surprising that at an early period of its history attention was directed to the claims of those "worn out" in the arduous and honourable work of preaching the Gospel, and that, with the increasing resources of the people, this movement advanced from its small beginning until it reached important dimensions. "The Preachers' Fund" is first mentioned in the Minutes of 1778; but the contributions for some years were not large, and were distributed chiefly as a fund of mercy. Subsequently the amount was largely augmented by subscriptions of preachers, until it took the form of a benefit fund, under the designation of the Preachers' Annuitant Society, which has been sustained mainly, and administered, in accordance with its rules, by those preachers who have been members. One object of the Centenary movement was to create a fund supplementary to this, called the New Auxiliary Fund, to the benefits of which Irish supernumerary ministers and widows were admitted on the payment from Ireland of sixpence per member and such other subscriptions as might be raised on the circuits. Thus a very much better provision was made for those who retired from the active work of the ministry and for the widows of deceased preachers.

Some zealous and influential persons of the Primitive Wesleyan

Society in Dublin having also resolved to celebrate the Centenary o Methodism, at their request the Rev. Adam Averell sent invitations to the leading members throughout the kingdom, to attend for that purpose a series of meetings in the metropolis, commencing on March 6th. Various resolutions were then adopted, expressive of the intention to raise a fund for the benefit of worn-out preachers and their widows, to assist in the maintenance and education of the children of preachers, and also for other purposes, and arranging for the holding of meetings to promote this throughout the country. At the meetings in Dublin £2,150 was subscribed, while at the meetings in general the attendance was large, a very gracious influence rested on the people, and the total amount raised was nearly £5,000.

Two new Primitive Wesleyan chapels were opened in spring. One was at Dromore, in the county of Down, on March 17th, when the Rev. Adam Averell and Mr. John Stephenson preached, and the collections amounted to £30. The other was at Faugher or Springfield, on April 28th, when the Rev. A. Averell, Mr. Thomas M'Fann, and Mr. John Stephenson preached. It was in this district of country, at Tonyloman, seventy-six years previously, that Methodism was introduced into Fermanagh. In 1806 a preaching-house was erected. It was a humble structure, with a thatched roof, yet in it many precious souls were won for Christ. For several years this old house had been so dilapidated that it was dangerous to use it, so the erection of a new building became a necessity. The Marquis of Ely was applied to for a lease, in order to rebuild on the old site, but he refused to grant it. Another plot had therefore to be secured, and on it the above neat and commodious house, which is still in use, was erected.

At a meeting of the leaders of Belfast, on November 12th, 1838, Mr. William Hamilton was authorized to wait on a Mr. Spence to obtain ground to build a chapel upon, and close a bargain with him if possible. This appears to have been the origin of the chapel at Willowvale, for the erection of which a building committee was appointed in the following September. This was the eleventh Methodist chapel built in the town.

At the March quarterly meeting in Belfast it was resolved, "That the financial committee appointed in December be instructed to consider the practicability of raising the married

preachers' salaries to £100 per annum, and to report to the meeting in June." What was the result of their deliberations is not recorded; but, at the close of his second year in the town, Mr. Tackaberry writes, "We have now a better prospect than at any period since our appointment. Several in the prayer-meetings and classes have been converted lately, and the number is daily increasing. I was in last Sunday night's meeting up to eleven o'clock, and even then the people showed some reluctance to leave. We sometimes permit persons who receive good to declare what God has done for their souls. We did so last Sunday night, and it had a melting and subduing effect upon the congregation. Strange to say, we have seldom any noise in those meetings, and yet the people tremble as if their very hearts were shaken, and sometimes they fall. This is the best field for Methodism in Ireland. In a few years it will very much take the lead of Dublin, both in number and influence. Party feeling is somewhat subsiding. I hope it will subside, and if it does we shall see good days in Belfast."

Upwards of one hundred Wesleyan ministers assembled in Belfast, under the presidency of the Rev. Thomas Jackson, on June 21st, to hold their annual Conference. The visitors from England were the Revs. Robert Newton, George Marsden, and John Beecham. During the year no less than seven ministers had been removed by death. These included two in the active work, the aged and devoted Ouseley and John Howe, together with Henry Lucy, John Remmington, Alexander Sturgeon, William Smith, and Andrew Hamilton, sen., who had been supernumeraries; and all died in the faith, and in the joyous hope of everlasting life through the merits of the Lord Jesus. David Waugh was elected by seniority into the Legal Hundred in the place of Archibald Murdock, superannuated, and John Hadden by ballot instead of Gideon Ouseley. John H. Boyd of Cork, William Brown of Belfast, and James M'Kee of Castleblayney were received on trial. The regular practice now commenced of sending three representatives to the British Conference, the Rev. William Reilly being chosen, in addition to the Revs. William Stewart and Thomas Waugh, who for nine years in succession were elected together. Although the Societies had been deprived of three hundred and thirty-nine members by emigration, there

was an increase of one hundred and thirty-nine. In the Address to the British Conference grateful testimony is borne to the success of the Centenary movement, thus: "We have the gratification of seeing our most sanguine expectations exceeded by the contributions of our members and friends, many of whom have contributed in a spirit of noble self-sacrificing liberality. The meetings were seasons of refreshing coming from the presence of the Lord, and the respected preachers and lay gentlemen deputed by your Committee to visit this country will be long and gratefully remembered by us in connection with this interesting occasion."

"The public religious services of the Conference," it is stated, "were attended by overflowing congregations; and the preachers seemed to be favoured of the Lord with peculiar liberty in ministering the word of life." Nor was their private social intercourse without leading to lasting good. One instance may be recorded. The Rev. Robert Huston was the guest of a Christian lady who states that immediately after his arrival a lay brother from another part of the country called to see him, and they soon got to prayer together. This brother, pleading for sanctifying grace, said—

> "If Thou canst so greatly bow,
> Friend of sinners, why not now?"

and paused, apparently much overcome. Mr. Huston then broke out with—

> "'Tis done! Thou dost this moment save,
> Thou dost this moment bless;"

and so it proved. When the friend had left, Mr. Huston said to his hostess, "I had the feeling just after entering the house that I should find spiritual good; surely this was a foretaste of it." It may be added that on another occasion, some time later, he baptized a lovely baby for this lady, and having put one or two questions of the usual kind, he said, "There is another question that is on my mind to ask: If the Lord should see fit to remove this child in infancy, will you resign Him cheerfully to His blessed will?" And ere three months had passed the child was taken home to heaven.

The sessions of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference com-

menced on June 26th. The Rev. Adam Averell was, as usual, elected President, and Mr. Thomas M'Fann Secretary. At the request of the venerable President, then in his eighty-sixth year, the Conference consented to elect a Vice-president, and the choice fell on Mr. Alexander Stewart. Charles Graham of the Irvinestown circuit was admitted on trial. A decrease in the membership of eight hundred and sixty-six was reported, and was attributed in great measure to the heavy drain on the Society by emigration. It was cheering, however, to find that neither this serious loss nor the interest excited by the Centenary movement had operated against the funds of the Society, as these continued in a healthy condition.

The Rev. William Cather now completed a term of three years on the Tullamore circuit, and on his last Sabbath in the town delivered, to the Sunday-school, an address in which he earnestly urged those present to decide for God. Thomas M. Macdonald* was the secretary, and such a deep impression was made on his mind that immediately afterwards he said to Robert G. Cather, who then lived in the town, and had been much impressed by an alarming accident, "If you give yourself to God, so will I." Cather replied, "If I knew that by walking to the end of the garden I would be converted, I would not do it. Go and decide for yourself. You may never have another opportunity." Macdonald promised to do so, and again urged the others to follow his example, but in vain. A very short time subsequently, however, young Cather became deeply in earnest about the salvation of his soul, and was made a joyous partaker of saving grace. The good work thus commenced soon spread, and led to the conversion of a number of young men, including, amongst others, William, son of Rev. William Crook, and Henry M. Beale. Andrew Johnston, a son of a Wesleyan minister, came to Tullamore from Clara, one Saturday, expecting to enjoy the Sunday with other unconverted friends, but, to his surprise, found himself in the midst of a band of devoted young Christians, and exclaimed, "If once I get out of this town, I'll never come here again." The Rev. Robert Jessop said to him, "Andrew, we hope to get you converted." "If you can convert the devil," said the youth, "you can convert me."

* Now Prebendary Macdonald of Manchester.

However, he consented to go to the service that evening, while one of the young converts watched him lest he should go out. At the close of the sermon an invitation was given to remain for a prayer-meeting, but Andrew rose and walked to the door. The young convert tried to keep him, and he, as he afterwards stated, felt so much of the devil in him that he was ready to strike him, yet remained, went forward to the rails, and there found the Saviour. On the following Saturday, John Hay, who for twenty months had been anxiously seeking mercy, and had heard of the glorious revival in Tullamore, went there from Mountmellick, accompanied by his leader, who wished to unite his prayers with others on behalf of the almost despairing anxious inquirer. They went to Mr. Charles Gunning's, where they met many of the young converts, and heard them praising God. Andrew Johnston told his religious experience, and then asked each one present, "Are you happy?" All said they were except young Hay, who answered, "No." "Then," said the other, "you'll not be long so." Robert G. Cather took the poor penitent in hand, showed an intense determination that he should believe, and did not rest until he could say, "My God is reconciled. His pardoning voice I hear."

The Rev. William Cather was now appointed to the Roscrea circuit, where the people, having heard of the good work in Tullamore, offered much prayer for reviving blessing in connection with the labour of His servant, and it was answered. On his first Sunday he had, in the sense of the Divine presence and power that rested on the congregations, an earnest of what soon followed. A young man named Isaac Fawcett of Parsonstown was the first converted, and in the course of a few months a large number of young people in the town obtained peace through believing. Amongst others, Mr. William K. Fayle, a highly acceptable and useful local preacher, had the joy of seeing three of his daughters and his son Benjamin decide for Christ; and in the family of Mr. John Shields, a most devoted leader, four daughters and two sons were brought into Christian liberty. The work extended to Roscrea, where many more were brought to the Lord. Then Templemore partook of the showers of blessings that refreshed the circuit, and one of those converted was a young Romanist, named Robert Boyle, who was so persecuted that he was advised to

emigrate. He went to Canada, where he entered the Primitive Methodist ministry, became a most popular and useful preacher, and was twice elected President of the Conference.

A gracious revival of the work of God also took place in Bandon, chiefly through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Rev. Robinson Scott, and many were brought into fellowship with God and His Church. The young preacher was full of zeal, and on coming to the circuit sought out the unconverted and made them individually the subject of special prayer. Amongst those who were thus remembered at the throne of grace by him, Mr. Cornwall, and others, were William, John, and Thomas Hunter, Edward Harte,* and William Bennett. One day Mr. Scott having arranged with Robert G. Cather, now a tutor in the town, to speak to Mr. Harte, and that he himself would continue in prayer at the time, great was their joy to learn that the subject of their solicitude had decided for Christ. The Lord then answered persevering prayer by affliction; Mrs. William Hunter died. Her end was most triumphant, and on the day of her funeral, while Mr. Scott was engaged in prayer, the bereaved husband exclaimed, triumphing in a conscious sense of sins forgiven, "Who did for every sinner die hath surely died for me!" and thus entered upon a course of earnest, though not persevering Christian usefulness. He had a much attached friend, Mr. Henry S. Place, an exceedingly intelligent man, but one who made no profession of religion, and whose influence over the young convert was therefore much dreaded by his friends. However, Mr. Hunter told what the Lord had done for his soul to Mr. Place, and thus he was awakened to a sense of his state, read Wesley's Sermons, and obtained peace and joy in believing. Then one evening, when Mr. Scott and a few others met for tea and Christian intercourse, during prayer John Hunter burst out into praise, in which all present joined. It appeared that, in answer to prayer, the Spirit of God had been striving with him, that he had been deeply impressed by the consistent lives of his sister and cousin, and that now he was enabled to rejoice in God his Saviour. His religious career, however, was exceedingly brief. On the following Sunday morning he went for the first time to class-meeting, during the course of the week was seized with

* Father of the Rev. Edward Harte.

typhus fever, and within ten days of his conversion passed in triumph to the home above. Three days latter, Eva Shine, a lovely girl of twelve years of age, also died, and her early and sudden removal made a deep and salutary impression on a large circle of friends. Thomas Hunter was now in deep distress about his soul, and one Sunday night, unable to sleep, he left his bed and pleaded for pardoning mercy, until he obtained the desire of his heart. About the same time William Bennett realized peace in believing, but his religious course was short. Two years subsequently he took ill of fever, and as the end approached, his mother, who was blind, having been brought into the room, said, "Let me feel him!" and then inquired if there was anything he wished to say. The dying man replied, "Leave to His sovereign sway to choose and to command," and soon passed into the world of spirits. One of those present says, "If ever I felt as if heaven was opened, and a dying spirit passed over me into it, it was when William Bennett died."

Space would fail to tell of the conversions of Mortlock Long, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, Jane Scott, afterwards Mrs. Henry Beamish, her two sisters, Anne Bright, and many others, whose consistent and useful lives proved a record worthy of lasting remembrance.

The Revs. Thomas W. Doolittle and Gibson M'Millen were appointed to the Sligo circuit for a second year, and found a people prepared of the Lord. The spirit of hearing became general, rich and poor flocked to the services, and hundreds of souls were won for Christ. The most notable of the latter was Mr. Stuart Irwin of Ballymote. At a field-meeting in Riverstown he was convinced of sin, and at the subsequent prayer-meeting in the chapel was enabled to rest on Christ for salvation. A short time afterwards, there was a fellowship-meeting in the chapel, erected nine years previously, in his own town and at once, when an opportunity was given for witnessing for Jesus, several stood up together, and Stuart among the rest. Some one beckoned to him to sit down; but unable to restrain himself, he cried out, "Oh, just wait a moment, till I tell what the Lord has done for my soul!" He commenced immediately to work for Christ, holding meetings in country places, often leaving home early on the Sabbath morning, and not returning until late at

night, assisting Dr. Lougheed in the town, teaching in the Sunday-school, and meeting classes. He devoted special attention to young men, and many of these, from different parts of the country and distant lands, have written gratefully acknowledging the inestimable benefit they derived from his instructions.

At the Conference of 1836 leave was given for the erection of a new chapel in Galway. Six months later the Rev. Walter O. Croggon writes, "I have heard much of Galway as the stronghold of superstition in Ireland, but was greatly cheered to find that we had a very respectable, attentive congregation, although they worship in one of the most inconvenient places, perhaps, in all Ireland or England. It is an upper room, to find which you must pass through a dark, dirty passage, and up a flight of steps. A spot, however, is secured for a new building, the local friends promise £200 towards it, and £500 more are required to erect a suitable place." This important undertaking was now completed, valuable aid having been rendered by Gideon Ouseley. The initiation of the scheme, however, as well as the chief responsibility of carrying it out, was the work of Mr. William N. Alley, to whose deep piety and self-denying labours, as well as the consistent life and generous hospitality of Mrs. Alley, the Methodists of the town are to this day deeply indebted.

Public attention was at this time directed to Wesley's character and to Methodism, by the pen of one who had already made himself very prominent in the political affairs of the day. Provoked, in all probability, by the sound Protestant influence which the Society exerted in checking the progress of Popery and in opposing the Romish tendencies of the Government in England, Daniel O'Connell made a violent attack on the Founder of Methodism and his followers. In England the disputant was met by the Rev. George Cubitt, and in Ireland by the Rev. Daniel Macafee. The letters of the latter created a marvellous sensation. With keen sarcasm, pungent wit, and withering invective, the author repelled the foul charges of "the Liberator," exposed his inconsistencies, and indignantly rejected his overtures. "What, sir!" said Macafee; "would you have us leave our father's house, and go along with the prodigal to feed swine, and live on the husks of popish superstitions? Would you have us renounce the bread and water of life, to live on Latin masses and a wafer God?

Would you have us renounce the Scriptures for the *ignis-fatuus* of tradition? Would you have us abandon the worship of the true God, through the only Mediator, Christ Jesus, to worship a dead saint, a senseless crucifix, a picture on a wall, or a deity whose substance grew in the field, was ground in a mill, was formed by the hand, and was transubstantiated, forsooth! by the *hocus pocus* of a priest who, perhaps, the night before the act of consecration, could not distinguish the difference between a wafer and a shilling? Would you have us forsake the society and friendship of the true and heavenly Church, which is clothed with the Sun of Righteousness and crowned with the stars of Apostolic beauty, and become the deluded varlets of the scarlet-coloured lady, who is bedecked with every earthly trumpery, drunk with the blood of saints, and still stands forth with 'Mystery, Babylon the Great,' written on her forehead? No, no, Mr. O'Connell; if you be a dupe, we are not to be deceived. Her bloated form frightens us, her grim countenance makes us shudder, her voice hisses like a rattle-snake, her breath smells of the upas-tree, and her colour reminds us of Smithfield and the bloody tragedy of 1641, while we can perceive the end of a bundle of faggots under her cloak, with a match dipped in turpentine in her unladylike hand." It is no wonder that letters written like this told in a way that O'Connell never ceased to feel.

At the close of the year the Rev. John Armstrong writes, concerning the Dungannon circuit, "I have now been eighteen months here. When I came I found all in confusion, both in town and country, more particularly the former, where the temple of the Lord was almost in ruins and the congregations gone to a shadow. My good brother Robert Hamilton and I sought direction from God in prayer, and He did direct us. The house is now well repaired, the congregations good, the Sunday-school large, and, best of all, the people are in union one with another."

On several of the circuits and missions of the Primitive Wesleyan Society there were gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit, more especially in connection with the Centenary services. In Dublin a Centenary lovefeast was held on November 12th, towards the close of which a number of persons became deeply distressed about their souls, and some were enabled to rest on Christ as their Saviour. The work thus commenced continued, and night

after night were heard the cries of penitents and the songs of newborn babes in Christ. At Bandon and its neighbourhood, Mallow, and Cork similar times of refreshing were vouchsafed. Of one of the services at Cork, Mr. George Robinson writes, "I certainly had not witnessed before in any meeting a feeling so spontaneous and so general, and this too in the absence of everything like mere excitement on the part of those by whom it was conducted. There was indeed excitement, powerful excitement, but it was the work of that blessed Spirit which came down on the disciples on the day of Pentecost." On the Ballyshannon circuit a revival had been in progress for two years, during which upwards of two hundred persons were converted, not one of whom was known to have gone back to the world.

Messrs. Heather and Griffin were appointed to Belfast, where they found a people ripe for a revival. Indications were at once afforded of the Divine presence and blessing, and the work gradually advanced until the Centenary meetings were held, concerning which great expectations had been excited, and were more than realized. On the afternoon of Sunday, November 5th, the day appointed for the celebration, a lovefeast was held, when the Lord manifested His power to convince and pardon sinners and to renew the spiritual strength of His people. In the evening Mr. Heather preached, and at the prayer-meeting which followed many precious souls were won for Christ. From this time, for a considerable period, scarcely a Sunday elapsed on which sinners were not converted to God, including some who subsequently proved to be amongst the most devoted and consistent members of the Society in the town. The work then spread to Ballymacarret and Holywood, at each of which some remarkable cases of conversion from deep moral degradation to exemplary holiness took place. One of these was that of a woman who had plunged into the lowest depth of iniquity, was led to enter the preaching-house, and there convinced of sin and brought to Christ. A marvellous sensation was created in the meeting when, rising from the floor on which she had rolled in agony, she exclaimed, "I was the greatest wretch in all Ballymacarret; it is the mercy of mercies that I am out of hell! I bless God that I am a living being, and in this house to-night." Then she paused, unable to proceed, but again regaining strength, cried out, "Glory, glory,

glory be to God! my heart is light, my burden is gone, my sins are forgiven," and with heaven beaming in her countenance, added, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God." At Holywood, when Mr. Griffin gave an invitation to anxious inquirers to come forward, nearly half the congregation crowded to the penitent forms.

The following instance of the providential care exercised by God over His servants claims our notice: The Rev. William M'Clure was at least on one occasion placed in such peculiarly trying circumstances, through a delay in receiving his usual quarterly remittance, that he had neither food nor money, so he and his wife bowed together at the throne of grace, told their wants to God, and then waited patiently the arrival of the next post, hoping for relief. The postman came round as usual, and passed, leaving no letter, to the bitter disappointment of those in sore need. In a few minutes, however, a knock was heard, and a devoted member of the Congregational Church entered. Having made some arrangements for a meeting, he was silent and for a moment seemingly embarrassed, and then said, "Mr. M'Clure, you must excuse me, if you please, when I tell you my sleep has been spoiled for two nights about you. On my telling my wife this morning, she said I must call on you and try to get my sleep back again. I saw you distressed and pale; you seemed in want. My dear brother, you must not be so, you shall not be so. God has given me abundance and some to spare, and none under heaven are more welcome to my means than Mrs. M'Clure and yourself. I know your income at best is small, and remittances in cases like yours are sometimes delayed. Now, sir, do oblige my wife and myself by accepting this," placing a ten-pound note on the table; "and do, good sir, always gratify me by just signifying at any time your wishes; it will so increase my happiness. Now good morning; my sleep is already restored." When he was gone Mrs. M'Clure came over to her husband, put her arms around him, and said, in impressive tones, "Who told Mr. White all about this matter? Does not God so care for us, William? Shall we ever fear to trust Him again?" And husband and wife wept together in silent gratitude before the Giver of all good.*

* Memoir of the Rev. W. M'Clure, pp. 142-13.

CHAPTER XXI.

1840

On January 17th, 1840, a Temperance-meeting was held at Bandon, in the court-house, which was crowded to excess, and was addressed, amongst others, by the Rev. Nicholas E. Dunscombe of Cork. This led to the formation of a Total Abstinence Society, of which Mr. John Scott was secretary. This association was worked with great energy, so as soon to consist of upwards of two hundred members, including a number of persons previously addicted to intemperance.

The following extracts from a letter written by a gentleman in Waterford, and dated March 17th, will be read with interest, as indicating the spirit which prevailed chiefly through the exertions of Father Mathew: "I think that Ireland never saw such a St. Patrick's Day since the death of that saint. This may be properly called St. Mathew's Day. I have been travelling through and through Waterford, and have not met as much as one individual in any way affected by liquor, and there are thousands in the streets. I looked in all the public-houses, but in most of them there was not a person to be seen but the landlady leaning over the counter, with sorrow pictured on her countenance, as if mourning the loss of departed friends. Every publican sells bread, some of them meat, and many other things, all denoting the badness of their trade. It is a good sign when the landlady is seen making a laundry of her tap-room as early as seven o'clock in the evening."

The Rev. Robert Huston was now on the Kilkenny mission, and amongst the noteworthy incidents which occurred in connection with his labours was the conversion of a young man named Thomas M'Cullagh, a native of the county of Galway, but at this time a resident in the city. He was induced to attend

the Wesleyan chapel by the entreaties of a young friend, and awakened to a sense of his state and danger. His religious impressions were deepened through the preaching of Mr. Huston, and for two successive Sundays he presented himself as a penitent in the prayer-meeting—first in the chapel, and then in the house of Mr. Thomas Little, to which he had been invited. On this occasion he was the first of several penitents who found peace. Mr. Huston knelt by his side at the time, and shook him warmly by the hand, when they stood up to sing the Doxology. The young convert began at once to work for Christ in the Sunday-school, in prayer-meetings, and as an exhorter, and with such zeal as to provoke the junior minister on the circuit, who brought him and others to the bar of the leaders' meeting for holding a noisy prayer-meeting at Stonyford. "This," says Mr. M'Cullagh, "was my first evangelical excursion and last ecclesiastical arraignment." Soon afterwards he removed to Mallow, where, acting as an exhorter, he ventured to take a text occasionally. His first sermon was preached in a private house at Ballyclough. In returning from a village where he had preached one evening, he and a companion lost their way, and at midnight found shelter in a humble cabin, with a poor widow and her cow.

A scene in connection with a visit of the Rev. William G. Campbell to the Kilkenny mission is too rich and characteristic to pass unrecorded. On the occasion referred to, Mr. Huston accompanied him to a place about twelve miles from Kilkenny, where they held a meeting in the evening. On the road they met two men, one of them staggering under the influence of drink, and the other endeavouring to help him home. Mr. Campbell reined up and cried, "Halloa! my poor fellow, you broke the pledge." "Oh, no, your reverence," replied the other, mistaking him for a priest. "Oh, but you have!" "Well, your reverence, it was the one I took from Father Mathew long ago." "Didn't I know?" said the missionary. "Come, now, you must take it again." "Oh, no, your reverence!" "Yes, you must." "Well, I'll promise not to take anything that would injure me." "Come, kneel down at once, and take it." The man knelt down on the road. "I think I'll take it too," said the other. "Now say after me," enjoined Mr. Campbell, "In the name of the Father." "In the name of the Father," replied the men. "And of the

Son." "And of the Son." "And of the Eternal Spirit." "'Ternal Spirit, 'Ternal Spirit!" exclaimed one of the men, staggered by the unfamiliar phraseology. "Are you a Catholic at all?" and bounding to his feet with energy, shouted to his companion, "Get up out of that! I'll not take a bit of it," as if his righteous indignation was roused at being so nearly hoaxed by a Protestant. The missionary proceeded on his journey, and solaced himself with the reflection of having at least made an effort to save a poor brand out of the fire, and thus arrest one of the giant evils of our country.

The missionary deputation in spring to the south consisted of the Rev. John Lomas and Mr. William Dawson of Barnbow, who travelled from place to place, preaching and addressing public meetings. The fire and genius of the eloquent Yorkshire farmer, especially, were admirably adapted to gain the attention and the hearts of the inhabitants of this country; whilst he saw enough of the Irish character, during his brief stay, to produce a love for it not easily chilled. His conversation, prayers, sermons, and speeches left an indelible impression. Cheerful and communicative, his aim in every company appeared to be the diffusion of happiness. At family worship in Carlow, having quoted the lines—

> "Worthy the Lamb that died, they cry,
> To be exalted thus,"

he cried out, "Stop, Gabriel! You daren't sing what follows. That's our privilege:—

> 'Worthy the Lamb, our hearts reply,
> For He was slain for us!'"

In the missionary meeting a Presbyterian and an Independent minister were on the platform. Assuming that they were Calvinists, he ingeniously showed that their devotions were in conflict with their doctrinal principles. "Gentlemen," he said, turning to them, "you have your alls and your everys as well as ourselves. We Methodists give out—

> "'O Jesus, ride on till *all* are subdued,
> Thy mercy make known and sprinkle Thy blood;
> Display Thy salvation and teach the new song,
> To *every* nation, and people, and tongue.'

Whereas you Calvinists pray, whilst you sing—

> "'From *all* that dwell below the skies
> Let the Creator's praise arise;
> Let the Redeemer's name be sung
> Through *every* land, by *every* tongue!'"

Mr. Dawson delivered at Maryborough his famous "agricultural speech," in which his leading thoughts were wrought out with an exuberance of imagery and illustration. "Mr. Wesley," he said, "began to enclose at Oxford. First he enclosed his brother Charles, George Whitefield, and others. Then he went to enclose in the gaol. After a while he came to enclose in Ireland. At last his heart got so large that he resolved to enclose the world, for, said he, 'the world is my parish.' The land enclosed, his next operation was to 'clear away the brushwood.' For this purpose he employed what he called 'the axe of the letter of the law.' This done, he proceeded to plough up the land, quoting with telling effect several passages of Scripture as the language of an awakened sinner. The fallow ground of the heart thus thoroughly broken up, he commenced to cast in the seed, and during this process the people smiled through their tears. 'The preacher,' he said, 'as we do in Yorkshire, sows with both hands;' then throwing out his right, he repeated, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Then his left hand, 'This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' Then again his right, 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only.' Then pausing, he added with energy, 'And this is enough to heave one's shoulder out,' 'but also for the sins of the whole world,' giving his arm a wide sweep." The same day he preached on the parable of the lost sheep. His introduction was unique. "I often wish," he said, "that I was alive in the time of our Lord. For if I were, I should have a great desire to get this scene painted—our Lord receiving sinners, and the scribes and Pharisees murmuring. Well, suppose I had my wish. There I have Sir Thomas Lawrence or Sir Joshua Reynolds employed." Here he imitated the painter for several seconds, without uttering a word. Breaking silence at last, and

uttering the language of the painter, he exclaimed, "I can't do it! There is so much of benignity, of compassion, of heaven in that countenance, I can't express it." His appeals to the prodigal rushing to ruin, despite a mother's prayers and a Saviour's agonies, were most affecting and powerful; while, ever and anon, his entreaty, "Stop sinner!" rang through the house with thrilling pathos. It was a night to be remembered.

At this period there were gracious revivals in Athlone, Tullamore, Drogheda, and Galway, the intelligence of which the Rev. William Starkey communicated to the people about Aughrim, exciting in their minds a spirit of prayer and expectation. On returning to that part of the mission, about a fortnight later, and while preaching on a Friday evening at Mackney, from Proverbs xxiv. 16, the Spirit of God was poured out, sobs and cries arose from all parts of the room, and turning to Frederick Elliott, the preacher said, "What shall we do? We must go to prayer," and they did. Four were converted to God that night. On the following Sabbath morning, at Aughrim, where Mr. Nixon, the mission-school teacher, preached regularly, eleven were led to the Saviour, and that evening at Mackney twenty-two more were brought to religious decision. The gracious work thus begun continued and spread, and the fruits of it are apparent to the present day. Several valuable laymen were raised up to sustain the cause, and at least four young men who subsequently entered the ranks of the Christian ministry, including Thomas and Robert Walsh, who went to America, and Frederick Elliott and Samuel Johnston, who entered the Irish itinerancy.*

In Belfast the gracious influences sought, and in some measure realized, descended on the congregations in a most remarkable manner. "Never since we came to this town," says Mr. Tackaberry, "were matters in as good a state as the present. Our special prayer-meetings are glorious seasons. I have seldom seen anything like them. That on Tuesday, January 28th, was one of the most hallowed and hallowing I have known. Several obtained forgiveness and the heart-renewing love; but the distinguishing feature of the meeting was, all present bowed in spirit before the Most High, and all seemed to receive good; our oldest leaders say they have seen nothing like that evening.

* Unpublished Autobiographical Sketch of Rev. F. Elliott.

Our leaders are blessed men of God. Of some of them it may be said, as of Stephen, they are 'full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.'" Again, the devoted minister writes, "We have really wonderful times in this town at present. Yesterday we held our March lovefeast. I have seen nothing which I thought equalled it in richness, and I do not expect to see anything better this side heaven. There were about eight hundred and fifty present. More than half of those who spoke testified to the all-cleansing power of the blood of Christ. All who spoke, spoke well. There was such a mixture of soundness, propriety, and coolness, and of praise, love, and joy, with solemnity, reverence, and awe. The feeling produced was quite overpowering. We hear of some made happy in the classes and in the homes, and we see some in the meetings every week. All this is without any confusion, I might say without any noise. On the evening of Sunday, March 1st, I saw several weep till you would imagine they should cry aloud or fall down; but they restrained themselves. Some of those very persons at that same meeting were made as happy as human nature could well bear; and yet there was no irreverent joy. I have not kept any account of the numbers saved during the last three months, but they must be very considerable. Perhaps I would not be above the truth if I said there were hundreds. The tide of holy excitement continues to flow, and we—preachers and leaders—seem determined not to expect an ebb. We hold a special prayer-meeting every Sunday evening after preaching, and another on Tuesday evening, at eight o'clock. The school-room seats three hundred and fifty, and it will not much longer contain us if the meetings continue to increase. After three or four persons have prayed, we invite all who are seeking pardon of sin or perfect love to come to what we call the penitents' benches, or if in the chapel, to the communion rails and front pews. Numbers, varying from twenty to seventy, usually accept the invitation; and I remember no evening, for many weeks, on which from three to twenty did not profess to have received the good they came to seek.* One night, coming out of a meeting during which twenty had been converted, Mrs. Reilly said, "They who think Christ will set up His throne on earth may look for His personal appearing; but here He is present, and

* Life and Labours of Tackaberry, pp. 205-8.

makes bare His arm." "Oh," replied Mrs. Tackaberry, with streaming eyes, "I desire nothing more than this until I meet Him in heaven." One of the many at this time led to the Saviour was a younger brother of Joseph W. M'Kay, Colin, who in Mr. Samuel Hunter's class was led to decide for God, and subsequently entered upon a course of unobtrusive and protracted usefulness. At the close of the three years during which Messrs. Reilly, Tackaberry, and Grant laboured in Belfast it was found the number of members had increased from nine hundred and ten to twelve hundred.

The preachers and members of the Primitive Wesleyan Society in Belfast, seeing the great prosperity of their cause, were convinced that the time had come to build a chapel worthy of their Connexion, and large enough to meet the wants of the increasing population of the town. Accordingly an admirable site was secured in Donegal place, suitable plans were obtained from Charles Lanyon, Esq., and the execution of the work committed to Mr. James Carlisle. On Easter Monday the foundation-stone was laid by Mr. William Campbell, the oldest member and leader of the Society on the circuit; and in the evening an adjourned meeting was held in the preaching-house, Academy street. This was largely attended, and was addressed with much power by Messrs. John Stephenson and Dawson D. Heather.

The Conference of the Wesleyan Methodists commenced in Dublin on June 19th, after the usual preparatory committees had met. About one hundred ministers were present, with the Rev. Theophilus Lessey as President, and the Rev. Thomas Jackson as Visitor. The Rev. William Stewart was elected Secretary, and continued to hold the office for eight years. The Rev. Thomas Lougheed was elected, by seniority, a member of the Legal Hundred in place of the Rev. Samuel Wood, superannuated. Nine candidates were received on trial. These included William Hoey (2nd), a native of the county of Donegal, who came out from the Brookeborough circuit, James S., son of the Rev. John Waugh, Robert G. Jones of Belfast, John Gilbert of the Irvinestown circuit, John Duncan, Joseph W. M'Kay, and John Hay. Four ministers, who had been supernumeraries, were found to have died during the year—Alexander Moore of Wicklow, Robert Wilson of

Omagh, John Dinnen of Coleraine, and John M'Arthur of Londonderry. Although six hundred members of the Society had emigrated in the twelve months, there was a net increase of six hundred and sixty-four; and although the year had been one of great depression and difficulty, none of the funds had declined; pleasing proofs that the hand of the Lord was with His servants, so that they neither laboured in vain nor spent their strength for nought. The Rev. James B. Gillman was elected junior representative to the British Conference.

The examination of the characters of the preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan Society having been completed on Wednesday, June 24th, the members of the Conference assembled on the following morning, when the Rev. Adam Averell was chosen President, Mr. Alexander Stewart Vice-president, and Mr. George Robinson Secretary. It was, however, soon apparent, from the advanced age of the President and its attendant circumstances, that he could be no longer expected to discharge the duties of the office he had so long and so efficiently sustained; he was therefore elected honorary President for life, during which the Vice-president should act in his place. One death had occurred in the ranks of the itinerants, that of Samuel M'Clung of Kinsale, who as the end approached was enabled to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Although there was a decrease in the membership of nearly eight hundred, the reports from the circuits and missions indicated much prosperity, which is alluded to in the Pastoral Address thus: "We have much pleasure in communicating to you the cheering intelligence that during the past year God has graciously visited several portions of our field of labour with copious outpourings of His Spirit. He has in numerous instances given testimony to the word of His grace; and many, both young and old, have been enabled to believe to the saving of their souls. It affords us peculiar satisfaction, as we are persuaded it will you, that our missionary department has largely partaken of this prosperity." Amongst the places thus favoured from on High were Kinsale, Aughnacloy, Cookstown, and Ballyjamesduff; and amongst those converted at Aughnacloy was a young man named Thomas Abraham, who subsequently entered the itinerancy.

Of the cause in the metropolis at this period the Rev.

George Vance, D.D., then stationed in Dublin, says, "The city formed but one circuit, with four ministers, two of whom were married. The superintendent and one of the young men resided in Abbey street, and the other two in Whitefriar street. Preaching services were held at Whitefriar street, Abbey street, and Gravel walk, at seven on Sunday mornings. Most of the classes met after these services. Whitefriar street was distinguished in those days for the interest taken in the early services. Judge Crampton and Mrs. Crampton were often present. It was refreshing to look at the large numbers that crowded up the stairs, and waited in the lobby for the singing of a hymn, before repairing to their several class-rooms. We had noon and evening services in Abbey street, Cork street, Ranelagh, and Ringsend; also a Sunday service in Richmond and Poolbeg streets. Local preachers shared in conducting some of these; but it was a rare thing for one of the regular ministers to have an opportunity of hearing a sermon, except in Abbey street at noon, where, owing to the Church service being read, two attended, one of whom acted as clerk. Abbey street was the attractive centre for the noon service, and there was always a very large attendance. The evening service of greatest importance was at Whitefriar street. Each of the three principal chapels had preaching services on Monday and Thursday evenings, after which classes met. Ranelagh, Cork street, Ringsend, Richmond, Donnybrook, Island-bridge, and Poolbeg street had also each one. The preachers' classes met in Whitefriar street and in Abbey street, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. A prayer-meeting was held in the lobby in each place for half an hour, after which the classes met. These prayer-meetings were often attended by persons who were not members. The preachers' meeting was held weekly in Abbey street, and the leaders' meeting on Friday night in Whitefriar street. The attendance was generally good. The Strangers' Friend Society had an importance in those days beyond what it possesses now. It may have been questionable work for its members, but it so occurred that at its weekly meetings, together with reporting cases for visitation, preaching and prayer-meeting appointments were arranged and recorded. Once a month, on a Sunday, a breakfast was held, each member being privileged to invite two friends; and the great interest of the meeting lay in a conversa-

tion on a passage of Scripture which had been selected for exposition by some member at the previous meeting. It was quite a treat to listen to the Rev. William Ferguson, who in his day might well be called the Nestor of the Irish Conference, Dr. Power, Charles Shaw, Frank White, Arthur Jones, and others give their ripe views of the subject under discussion. The writer of this reminiscence recollects vividly the reluctance which was often observed in the Sunday-school superintendents or teachers who had to hasten away, and the feeling of regret was general when the hour for the noon services had come and the meeting had to be closed. The influence of these monthly breakfasts on the social life of Methodism in Dublin was very marked, and as they were most profitable, and calculated to promote the social life of the Church, it is to be regretted they were ever discontinued." The old chapel at Gravel-walk having been pulled down, a new building was erected, and was opened by the Rev. George B. Macdonald.

The Rev. William P. Appelbe was sent as the junior preacher to Limerick, and naturally felt rather nervous in going to the circuit, as the surrounding country was in a very disturbed state, and as the Rev. John Howe, the previous superintendent, had died there of heart disease, supposed to have been superinduced by fright and serious injury, sustained when attacked by some ruffians and thrown out of his gig. However, the Lord mercifully preserved His servant from harm and blessed him in his work. Amongst others converted was a young man who subsequently entered the ministry of the Established Church, and settled in Bath. He writes, "Dr. Appelbe was, in the most absolute sense of the word, my spiritual father. When I was about seventeen, one Sunday afternoon, on my way home from church, I, with others, turned into the room to hear the new preacher from Limerick. He stood behind a table, and I sat on the form next to the table. His text was, 'Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.' Had he delivered the same truths apart from his peculiar energy, probably it would not have affected me so much; but both together, the awfully solemn truths and the extraordinary energy of the preacher, completely broke me down; tears flowed from my eyes, and I buried my face in my handkerchief. I surrendered my heart to God that day, joined the Society, and

heard Mr. Appelbe on every subsequent occasion when he visited Adare during the ensuing three years. In a short time I obtained the witness of the Spirit. My sister obtained the blessing of sanctification under his ministry, and for more than forty years has walked in the light of God's countenance." *

The Revs. James B. Gillman and Fossey Tackaberry were appointed to Cork. The first impressions of the latter were not the most favourable. He writes, "I fancy this a stiff enough soil for revival operations. I like the city in many respects. We have a lovely chapel. The Sunday evening congregations are from two hundred and fifty to two hundred and ninety. The country is rough enough. Splendid ground to which to send a dandy preacher!" However, soon prospects began to brighten, and the devoted evangelist says, "Our Sunday congregations are noble. The last four or five weeks they have averaged from seven to eight hundred. I held prayer-meetings on the last two Sunday nights; about thirty or forty came forward as penitents, and some professed to receive peace with God each evening. The leaders are in good tone and hope for a revival, and I hope so too. Our Society here is not half so large as in Belfast, but there are several fine old Christians in it. I have met with some noble women, especially in the classes of Mr. James Field, who is a very uncommon man. Withal, we have no such material here as on my last circuit. Popery abounds everywhere, and consequently the wickedness of the people is awful. You would think the devil himself was in them. Cursing, brawling, and fighting on every hand. And anything to equal the lower orders for lying and cheating I never met before, and indeed had no notion of until now. Amongst the Protestants, High-Churchism is very prevalent, and our own Society is pretty well leavened with such predilections. However, these things, it is likely, appear to me in a stronger light, being just fresh from Belfast." In September Mr. Tackaberry thus describes his impressions as to persons and things: "Mr. Gillman, so far as I can judge, is a very superior man, amiable and unostentatious. His principle appears to be of the highest order; his piety is much deeper than I had previously supposed; and even were it otherwise, he could do nothing low or mean. As a preacher I believe we have not his equal in the

* Crook's Memorial of Dr. Appelbe, pp. 48—52.

Irish Conference. We have a very un-every-day character among us in Mr. James Field. He has four classes, containing one hundred members, and although very infirm on his feet, looks well after them. He is a man of strong sense, has read a good deal, has enjoyed the blessing of perfect love with little intermission for thirty-five years, speaks of it on all occasions, drives faith to the very edge of Solifidianism, and piety to the verge of Antinomianism, yet never crosses the line. He wields a powerful influence deservedly here; all respect him, and all who are good love him." Amongst the members of Society in the city was a young man of sixteen, James C. Bass, who in the May previous had laid hold by faith on Christ as his Saviour, was greatly blessed at the services conducted by Messrs. Gillman and Tackaberry, and was thus prepared for his subsequent career of usefulness as a Methodist minister.

The Rev. Edward M. Banks was stationed for a second year in Tralee. Here he took in Kells a coastguard station, on a narrow sandy beach, in former times celebrated for smuggling; and finding an opening in Caherciveen, seven miles distant, he entered it, and had the honour of preaching the first Methodist sermon in that town.

The Revs. Thomas Meredith and Gibson M'Millen were sent to Londonderry, where the self-denying and earnest efforts of the latter, more especially in connection with a field-meeting, were such as to bring on an attack of typhus fever—the only illness, except the last, in his career—and his life was despaired of. God, however, assured him, in a dream, that he would not die then, but be spared for years afterwards, and thus it proved.*

The Revs. William Reilly and Joseph W. M'Kay were appointed to Portadown, where they found a fine field for missionary labour. The town itself was "rich in piety, gifts, and wealth," including amongst its worthies the Shillingtons, Stanleys, Cowdys, Pauls, Montgomerys, and many others remarkable for their solid piety and warm attachment to Methodism. The Shillingtons were noble specimens of wisdom, godliness, and unswerving attachment to the Church of their father. Mrs. Cowdy was a lady of good sense and firm belief in Methodist doctrinal teaching, with more than ordinary ability to defend it.

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 916.

A local clergyman who was a strong advocate for baptismal regeneration and apostolic succession once tried his logical powers on her, but was soon silenced, and never made the attempt again. "Mr. William Paul," says Reilly, "exceeded any one I had known in his spirit and power in prayer; and, oh, how rich and copious were his quotations from Scripture and our hymns!" It is no wonder that with such leaders the prayer-meetings were frequently accompanied with glorious manifestations of the Divine presence and power. The country districts were remarkable for their simplicity, lively, earnest piety, and, in some instances, ignorance of the pleasures of the world. Thus one evening a young preacher having denounced prevalent vices, including the "sports of the turf," the question subsequently arose in a rustic gathering what he meant. "Oh," said one, "the pleasure of sitting round a good fire on a winter's night!" "No," said another, "it is the sport which boys and girls have in the bog when cutting turf;" while a third affirmed, "It must be cutting turf unknown'st, when the landlord has forbidden it!" At Scotch street there was a nice chapel, which had been built four years; and in the neighbourhood was the residence of Mr. William Lock, who, when a boy, had often accompanied Mr. Wesley round the country, and helped him to sing. There was a lively people in the district surrounding this favourite retreat. At Ballymagerny there was a large preaching-house, erected about twenty-six years, and a good Sunday-morning congregation, the service in the evening being held at Loughgall. The Robb family resided at Derrybrughas, and were "a worthy and steady race." Robert Croan and his household were "head-and-hand Methodists," in whose granary quarterly lovefeasts were held, and who ever received their friends and other members with the most generous hospitality.*

The Rev. John Armstrong was stationed in Lurgan. There he was asked by Mr. George Ruddell, one of the leading Methodists on the circuit, if he would have any objection to his lending his store to the parish priest to hold a Temperance meeting in it. "Certainly not," said Mr. Armstrong. "But," inquired the other, "will you come and help at it?" "Yes," replied the devoted itinerant. "I'd help the Pope of Rome to banish drunkenness

* Unpublished papers of the Rev. William Reilly.

out of the land!" The meeting was held, a large audience, consisting of people of the different local religious denominations, assembled, two priests and the Methodist preachers delivered addresses, and "lasting good was done."

During the autumn several new Primitive Wesleyan chapels were opened. One of these was at New Ross, on September 6th, when sermons were preached by Mr. George Revington, and the collections were upwards of £20, the cost of the building being about £300. A second of these new erections was in the midst of a Protestant colony at Kilmeage, in the county of Kildare. It cost £280, was opened on October 25th, by Mr. Revington, and the sum of £21 was contributed. The third new preaching-house was at Moneymore, where twenty years previously a chapel had been erected, but was blown down by the storm in January, 1839. The Drapers' Company of London now rebuilt this on a different plan and in a more permanent manner. On the ground floor there were apartments for a local preacher, to whom £10 per annum was allowed by the Company, and on the first floor a room was fitted up for public services. This edifice was opened for religious worship by Mr. Edward Addy, on Sunday, November 8th; the circumstances excited a good deal of interest, and many attended the service.*

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1840, pp. 464-67.

CHAPTER XXII.

1841.

At the Primitive Wesleyan Conference of 1840 Messrs. William Craig and Charles Graham were appointed to the Charlemont circuit, and in a spirit of full consecration entered heartily into their work. In order to secure the co-operation of the leaders, they convened them in band-meetings, spoke freely with them upon the subject of Christian experience, and made arrangements for the more efficient carrying on of Christian work. In November lovefeasts were held in various parts of the circuit, and were greatly acknowledged of the Lord. At one of these several persons came forward seeking the pardoning mercy of God, and amongst others a man of four-score years old, who had long sat "in the seat of the scornful," and to the wonder of his acquaintances, was enabled to rejoice in the Divine favour. The Christmas services, together with the quarterly and watch-night meetings, were also much blessed, many persons being awakened to a sense of their danger and enabled to believe unto salvation. At a missionary meeting in Dungorman the Holy Spirit was poured out in a remarkable manner; the concluding prayer-meeting was continued until near midnight; thirty-nine persons knelt around the platform seeking remission of their sins, and ten professed to have received the blessing. Eight or ten leaders in the neighbourhood of Tullyroan then resolved that after meeting their classes on the Sunday mornings, and holding prayer-meetings in the afternoons, to hold united evening services in succession through different parts of their neighbourhood. At the first of these general meetings many were cut to the heart, and seven brought into Gospel liberty. This, however, was only the beginning of good days. The services were continued with increasing success for months, there was not a barren

meeting, and on an average eight or ten persons every Sabbath found peace with God. In February, 1841, five lovefeasts were held, in different parts of the circuit, and proved a great blessing. At Dungannon, after the meeting had continued for three hours, it was dismissed; but several persons cried out through the disquietude of their hearts, and would not depart until they found rest in Christ. The leaders at Killyman and Derryadd followed the example of their brethren at Tullyroan, and with similar results; but even greater success attended the labours of a few young men from Dungannon and two or three leaders from the neighbourhood of Castlecaulfield. Thus Glenadush, Clonmain, Lisnamonaghan, Ardress, Derryscollop, and Aghinlig in succession shared in the showers of blessing that refreshed and blessed the country.*

The Primitive Wesleyan Society at Cootehill having for years laboured under serious inconvenience for want of a suitable place in which to conduct religious services, the lack was at length supplied. A valuable site was secured, on which a neat and commodious house was erected, at a cost of about £420, and the opening service was conducted by Mr. Dawson D. Heather, who preached an excellent and appropriate sermon to a numerous audience. The collection, including what was obtained by the sale of tickets, amounted to £20.†

Mr. Samuel Larminie was stationed on the Youghal mission, to which, it is said, he had gone with many misgivings, as it was his first time for engaging in Christian work in the south. His fears, however, were groundless. Although he met with much opposition from the Romish priests and their abetters, none of these things moved him; he manfully took up his cross, in the public streets, fairs, and markets, boldly proclaimed Jesus Christ as—

> "The only name to sinners given
> Which lifts poor dying worms to heaven,"

and the Lord did not suffer His servant to labour in vain or spend his strength for nought, for he had many souls for his hire. Large numbers of Roman Catholics "heard the word with gladness," not a few of whom were delivered from the thraldom by

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1841, pp. 385-89.
† *Ibid*, 1841, p. 313.

which they had been enslaved; and many Protestants who had been living "without God in the world" were led to see the error of their ways, and to seek and find redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins.*

At the Wesleyan Methodist March quarterly meeting held in Belfast it was resolved to recommend the Conference to divide the circuit into two parts; that the following preaching-places should belong to the South circuit: Donegal square, Wesley place, Willowvale, Malone, Drum, Finaghy, Falls, Milltown, and Whiterock; and the following to the North circuit: Frederick street, Ballymacarret, Lagan village, Bridge-end, Knock, Castlereagh, Holywood, Whitehouse, Ligoniel, and Ballygomartin. Arrangements were also made for securing a site for the erection of a new chapel at Ligoniel; and in the succeeding month a building committee was formed to carry out the project, which was completed in the following year.

Leave having been given by the Conference for the sale of the Wesleyan chapel at Bushmills, erected in 1826, and the building of a new edifice, this house was in due time completed, chiefly through the exertions of the Rev. William A. Darby, and set apart for the worship of God. Many changes took place subsequently in the Society, and greatly lessened the number of members; but one poor man remained faithful to the good cause, even when left alone. Being deprived of sight, he was called Blind Bob. He was truly pious, and the accounts he gave at the lovefeasts of his religious experience have been vividly remembered by those who were present and still survive. Very numerous and marked were the answers to prayer that he received. Thus on one occasion, when very destitute, and laying his case earnestly before the throne of grace, a visitor to the Causeway happened to pass and overhear the prayer, and thus became so deeply interested in the poor man that, on returning home, he sent him £3, which more than supplied all his then temporal needs.

The congregations in Newry having become too large for the old Wesleyan chapel, built in 1786, it was resolved that a new building should be erected. Accordingly an excellent site having been secured, and the consent of Conference obtained, the project was arried out, and the opening services were conducted by the

* *Ibid*, 1864, pp. 87, 88.

Rev. Robert Young. He writes from the town, in a letter dated April 20th, 1841, "I arrived here on Saturday evening, preached twice on Sunday, and again last evening. The chapel is a beautiful one, elegant in its simplicity. The congregations were good; indeed, the house was filled. The collections on Sabbath were £45, proceeds of sale of tickets £30, and extraordinary contributions obtained at a tea-meeting yesterday afternoon £60. A very gracious influence attended the services, and about twenty penitents professed to have obtained salvation. The friends have prevailed with me to remain over to-day, and preach again this evening." *

During the spring of this year, in connection with the annual missionary services, was held the first missionary breakfast-meeting in Bandon. There had been previously at least two breakfast-meetings in the town. One was in January, 1838, for the consideration of the spiritual and financial state of the Society. The other was in August, 1840, to make a presentation to the Rev. Thomas Waugh on his leaving the circuit; but now, apparently for the first time, this deeply interesting and popular service was associated with the cause of missions. There was a large debt due by the Society, and this meeting was held evidently to assist in removing this burden. Although the circuit raised nearly one hundred and fifty pounds during the year for the Mission Fund, in response to this special appeal £52 18*s.* 6*d.* was subscribed in addition; and the meeting proved so interesting that it became a regular annual institution, no expense or labour being spared by the members of the Society to make it in every way as interesting and attractive as possible.

At Cork Mr. James Salter was the leading office-bearer of the Society, and one greatly respected and beloved; but he and several other members unfortunately got hold of the idea that they could better their circumstances by emigrating. Accordingly, having commissioned a friend to purchase some land for them in New Zealand, which he did, Messrs. Salter, John Wilkinson, and George Stannard, with their families, in all twenty-two persons, embarked for the country of their adoption, to the serious loss of Methodism in Cork. They reached Auckland in safety, and thence, finding no other way of getting to their destination at

* Unpublished letter to the Rev. T. Waugh.

Kaipara, chartered a brig to convey them. They called in at the Bay of Islands, where Mr. Stannard resolved to proceed overland, and on completing his journey learned, to his dismay, that the vessel had been wrecked, and all his friends, except one little boy, drowned. It appeared that the boat had struck on some quicksands, that then Mr. Salter had called his family and friends around him in the saloon, and that there, knee-deep in water, he had commended them all to God, while one after another they were swept away by the rolling waves. Mr. Stannard was received into the staff of the Methodist mission, and in it subsequently did a noble work for Christ in New Zealand.

At the annual missionary meeting in Exeter Hall, London, Ireland had an unusually large number of representatives. The chair was occupied by James Emerson Tennent, Esq., M.P. for Belfast, and speeches were delivered by representatives in Parliament of the counties of Donegal and Londonderry and the boroughs of Coleraine and Bandon, as well as by the Rev. James B. Gillman; and by each of these eloquent speakers strong and grateful testimony was borne to the important and valued work done by Irish Methodism, notwithstanding serious and powerful obstacles. "Truth," said Mr. Gillman, "is prevailing, although comparatively slowly, and there is a shaking in the minds of the people of Ireland. They feel the foundation on which they have so long rested is not that stable foundation which they had been led to suppose it was; and were it not for priestly influence, many of them would come over to us. Many leave Ireland for the sake of being Protestants. They come to England that they may be Protestants, and they go to America that they may be Protestants. We trust, however, that the period is not far distant when men may become Protestants in Ireland without fear of molestation."

The Rev. William Cooke had now been four years superintendent of the Irish missions of the New Connexion, and they rapidly extended and grew in strength during his sway. The earnest spirit of co-operation infused into them by his intrepid enterprise appeared in substantial results. New chapels were built in Belfast, Newtownards, Priesthill, and Dromore. Missionaries were stationed in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and the Isle of Arran, where the Gospel was preached in the Irish language.

Industrial schools were also established in connection with some of these missions. In addition to the above places, missions were opened in Dublin, Dromore, Galway, Ballyclare, and Lurgan. The number of missionaries employed was increased from nine to eighteen, and the membership rose from nine hundred and seventy-one to fourteen hundred and one.

The annual meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference was held in Cork, and commenced on June 25th. The Rev. Robert Newton presided, and he was accompanied by the Rev. John Bowers. Robert A. Devers, a native of Carndonagh, was received as having travelled twelve months, and seven candidates were admitted on trial. These included John Oliver and Anketell M. Henderson of the Castleblayney circuit, William Gibson of Belfast, Robert G. Cather, and Wallace M'Mullen. Two supernumerary ministers had finished their course during the year—Michael Murphy of Dublin, and John Wilson of Mullahead, near Tanderagee. Although nearly one thousand members had emigrated, there was a net increase in the membership reported of two hundred and twenty-one. When the stations, as arranged by the Committee, were brought into the Conference, they were read twice and then confirmed without a single alteration. The Rev. Henry Price was elected junior representative to the British Conference. The public religious services were attended by large and attentive congregations, and the Divine blessing descended on the people. On June 29th Mr. Newton writes, "Last Sabbath was a day to be remembered. I preached in the morning, and Mr. Bowers in the evening. The Patrick street chapel could not contain the multitudes that came together. Wesleyan Methodism now commands the attention of the public in a way that it never did before. I have this evening to conduct the solemn ordination service, and to-morrow evening to deliver the charge."*

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced on June 30th, with the examination of the characters of the preachers; and on the following day, when joined by the lay representatives, the general business began with the re-election of the Vice-president and Secretary of the previous year. The Rev. Adam Averell was present afterwards, although in his eighty-eighth year, and it is

* Life of the Rev. Dr. Newton, p. 234.

said, "His address after taking the chair, as well as his subsequent prayers and counsels, will not soon be forgotten by those who were present." Five candidates were received on trial. These included John Wilson of the Ballyshannon circuit, Robert Kerr of Lettan near Tempo, William Robinson of the Newtownstewart circuit, and Thomas C. Maguire. Two brethren had died during the year, the venerable James Peacock and the youthful Guy Cunningham, and each had passed hence in holy triumph. Although there was a decrease in the membership of six hundred and forty-one, it was ascribed wholly to emigration, and the state of the Connexion was considered sound and healthy.

About two months later the preaching-house in Donegal place, Belfast, was completed, being the twelth Methodist chapel erected in the town. It and the adjoining premises cost upwards of £4,000, towards which £1,000 was contributed from the Centenary Fund. The opening service was held on Sunday afternoon, September 19th, and was conducted by the Rev. Adam Averell and Mr. George Robinson, the latter preaching from Romans iii. 24—27. Mr. George Revington discoursed in the evening, from Psalm lxvii. 1, 2; and on each occasion it was estimated that not less than fifteen hundred persons were present. At the close of the afternoon service the Sunday-school scholars and their teachers walked in procession from the preaching-house, Academy street, to Donegal place, and took possession of the school-room underneath the chapel, as their new quarters. On Monday evening a public meeting was held, at which addresses were delivered by Messrs. Averell, Revington, Robinson, and Heather; and on the following Sunday sermons were preached by Messrs. Stephenson and M'Fann. The collections, including proceeds of the sale of admission cards, amounted to £210 12*s.* 4*d.** A considerable portion of the balance was subsequently collected by Mr. Heather in America.

The Primitive Wesleyan Society in Dublin, as well as the Connexion in general, sustained a very serious loss by the death of Isaac D'Olier, Esq., LL.D., one of the treasurers of the Missionary Fund. In early life a contemporary and acquaintance of Wesley and Fletcher, he partook of their spirit, embraced their theological views, and identified himself heartily with their followers.

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1841, p. 467.

In him the preachers found a wise counsellor and kind friend, the poor a cheerful giver, and the Connexional funds a generous supporter. About ten days before his death, on his medical attendants leaving his room, he asked his wife, daughter of Mr. Henry Brooke, if they thought he would recover. She answered, "No," and he immediately clasped his hands and exclaimed, "Thank God! thank God! It is the best news I ever heard." A short time before the end came, he requested his wife to speak to him. She said, "My dear, Jesus is waiting with outstretched arms to receive you!" and he added, "Jesus, my loving Advocate," pressed her hand, and passed into the more immediate presence of the Saviour whom he loved.

The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry was appointed superintendent of the Cork circuit, with the Rev. John Greer as his colleague, and entered on his work with renewed consecration to the service of God; but he little knew the severe domestic trials he was about to endure. The Conference had only a little more than concluded when the city elections commenced, and were accompanied with serious riots. Mr. Tackaberry writes, "George's street was crowded, nor was it safe to walk through it; the excitement was fearful. I saw men throw stones at the police again and again, and even at the sheriff while reading the Riot Act. Several persons were insulted, amongst whom was Mr. Price, one of our preachers, who was followed by a mob, and would have been severely handled had he not obtained a place of security." Some members of the Merciful Society, when on their way to one of their meetings, were pursued by a mob, and fled for refuge to the minister's residence. Here they were followed, the door was burst open, the house searched, and nearly all the glass in front smashed. Of course Mrs. Tackaberry and the children were greatly frightened—on the following morning a little boy died, and in about two months his mother followed him to the world of spirits, the death of each being at least hastened by the fright they had received.

The following is Mr. Tackaberry's account of the end of his son: "We had no child at James's age who gave similar indications of talent, or attracted the same notice as he did. The last conversation I had with him relative to religion was on Sunday. He asked me to take him in my arms and walk the room with

him. I did so, and asked him should I sing a hymn for him. 'Yes, papa, sing, There is a land of pure delight!' After I had sung a verse or two, he inquired, 'Papa, is the Jordan a real river? Is there water in it?' I told him it was a real river, that God's people, who had left Egypt and been in the wilderness, had to cross it before they could go into Canaan; but the Jordan we had to cross was death; that Jesus, who loved us, would meet us there, and that then we would go to be with Him in heaven. I asked him, 'Do you understand me, James?' He looked up with animation, and answered with considerable energy, 'I do, papa; I do understand you, and I wish I was crossing Jordan now.' I answered, 'My dear, it is not far off; you will soon cross it; you will soon be with Jesus.' This morning he asked me to give him a drink and to lay him by mamma in her bed. I did so, attended the half-past six o'clock meeting, and afterwards, while in my study, Eliza ran down and told me he was dying. He sank rapidly. We knelt round his bed, and said as we could, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!'"

The Revs. William G. Campbell and Robert Hewitt were stationed on the Galway mission, where their labours were greatly blessed. The former writes, in a letter dated December 18th, "You will rejoice to hear that a glorious display of Divine power has been vouchsafed to us in this town for the last four weeks, during which about one hundred persons have professed to have obtained the 'knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.' The work still goes on, and we hope it will spread through the whole town. Already some of the most notoriously wicked characters have sought and found mercy. Our Society is increased five-fold. My colleague labours faithfully, and so do all the class-leaders." * Amongst those converted was a lad of eleven years of age, George Alley, who has subsequently proved such an earnest and successful Christian minister. He was born at Ballinasloe, and on the death of his father removed to Galway to reside with his brother, Mr. William N. Alley. George was brought under deep conviction of sin at a service held by Mr. Campbell, and at a prayer-meeting, on a Sunday evening, earnestly sought, but did not find the Saviour. On the following morning the missionary

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1842, p. 59.

happened to breakfast with the Alleys, and while conducting family worship great power came down, and then the heart of the lad was filled with peace and joy. While yet a boy he commenced to hold meetings for youths of about his own age, and not without success. Subsequently, in several surrounding coast-guard stations, he found another sphere of Christian work, and at one of them preached his first sermon from 1 Timothy i. 15, being thus prepared for a wider field of usefulness.

Mr. Hewitt on one occasion, when about half-way between Tuam and Castlereagh, having called at a public-house to feed his horse, asked the owner if he ever thought of death, and how he felt at the prospect of it. "I feel awfully afraid," the man replied, "because I don't know where I'll go then. Some say there is a place called heaven, and a place called hell, and a place called purgatory; but for my part I don't know of any such place, for I have never been there." "Did you ever meet with an old book called the Bible," inquired the missionary, "that gives information about heaven and hell?" "Never, sir." "Did you never hear of the blessed Saviour, who came into the world to die for sinners?" "No." "Have you not heard of the blessed Virgin Mary's Son?" "Oh, yes, I know her very well." "As you have no knowledge of Jesus, if you could get this old book it would tell you all about Him." "Perhaps, sir, you could get me that book." "I am sorry I have not a copy with me that I can part with; but I will give you a recipe out of it, to cure the fear of death." "The Lord bless you, sir." Mr. Hewitt then wrote on a piece of paper, in Irish, "O God, pardon all my sins, for the sake of the blood of Jesus Christ," and handing it, said, "You must say these words on your knees three times every day till I see you again; and if you say them every hour, so much the better." "The Lord bless you, sir," said the man, "and I will; but I fear I'll forget them. My daughter has a fine memory; I'll call her out, and she'll put me in mind of them." The daughter came, read the prayer, and said she would remember it. When the time for the missionary's return came round, and he approached the place, the man met him on the road, and taking off his hat, waved it over his head, shouting, "I'm cured! I'm cured!" "Has the recipe done you any good?" inquired Mr. Hewitt. "It has cured me, so that I would not be afraid to die any minute, not if I was just now to

drop down dead at your horse's feet." "How is that?" "Well, about a week agone I was minding the cows, and I was repeatin' it, and repeatin' it, and me lying up again the ditch. At last I thought it was wrong to be saying such fine words in that way, so I turned upon my knees and began to say them. While I was repeatin' it I got a stroke at my heart and fell on my face. I could not tell how long I was there, but when I came to I could say nothing but 'Glory, glory, glory be to God!' If I had wings I would have flew away to God Almighty. Ever since that I'm not afraid to die at any hour, night or morning. But, sir, my wife is dying; would you come in and see her?" The missionary consented, and on entering the house of the dying woman, said, "You seem very ill. You are going to take a long journey. Where are you going?" "I don't know, sir." "Is it not a dangerous thing to enter on such a journey and not to know where you are going?" "Oh, it is, sir!" "Your husband says he is not afraid to die, because he is sure of heaven. The recipe that cured him of the fear of death will cure you." "Oh, sir," said she, "the husband I used to have was the cursingest, swearingest, drunkenest, wickedest man in all the country! he would knock the children and servants about, and we were all afraid of him; but the one I have now is the quietest, easiest, nicest man you ever saw." "When did that change take place?" "Just about a week agone, when he came home from the cows, those inside ran to hide, as they used to do; but he came in so easy, they hardly knew him, and he sat on a chair so nice, not saying a word. Ever since he is just like a little child." Mr. Hewitt urged her to use the same recipe which had proved so effectual in the cure of her husband, and having commended her to God, went on his way rejoicing, followed by the old man's earnest benediction.

The Rev. William Reilly of Portadown had the Rev. Robert G. Cather as his colleague, whom he describes as "a kind, tender young man, who laboured with great cordiality and not without success. He had popular talents, but preached too long, and sometimes a characteristic failure of memory was seen in his ministrations." The Rev. John Armstrong occasionally came over from Lurgan. One Monday morning he called on Mr. Reilly and said, "I understand you preached a good sermon at the lovefeast yesterday, but it was a little on the long side, as yours generally

are." "I do not think that," replied Mr. Reilly. "In general my sermons are not very long; they occupy only about forty-five or fifty minutes." "But," continued Mr. Armstrong, "my very best sermons I preach in forty minutes." At public meetings he generally displayed his peculiar tact, acuteness, and humour in reviewing the preceding speeches and speakers, thus: "There is Mr. T., the senior deputation, with his plain matters of fact. Brother Atkins you would know from his classic style was at the Institution. Brother M'Kay comes unmistakably from the pious people of Portadown. And when brother W. got up he said he belonged to the heavy horse—heavy enough indeed!"*

Mr. Alexander Crookshank, who had conducted the legal proceedings for the Wesleyan Society in 1817, having subsequently lived in Canada for a number of years, now, with his family,† returned to Ireland and settled in Belfast. The voyage was perilous and protracted, lasting for a month and sixteen days. Once the ship was water-logged for thirteen hours, having ten men constantly working at the pumps, and the water hourly increasing. At length the captain stated that if it rose another foot the pumping must be given up, the ship should be left to the winds and waves, and every one on board would be lashed to the rigging until taken up by some passing vessel. Horrified at the prospect of the privations and suffering involved in this, Mr. Crookshank said, "There is hope yet; one anchor remains," and had recourse to prayer. While thus pleading with God, He made bare His arm, the storm ceased, the wind changed, and the ship heaved over to the other side. Thus the leak was discovered and repaired, and in a short time the travellers, with a favourable breeze, were again under way. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

During the session of the British Conference in Manchester, an American Methodist preacher, James Caughey, a native of Ireland, arrived in the city, and became acquainted with several of the ministers, including the Revs. Thomas Waugh and William Stewart. The former, on learning that the stranger intended to visit his native land, gave him a letter of introduction

* Unpublished papers of the Rev. W. Reilly.

† Including the present writer, then a boy five years old.

to the Irish Wesleyan ministers. Following what he believed to be his providential course, Mr. Caughey sailed for Dublin, where he was cordially welcomed by the ministers, and invited to preach in Gravel walk, or as it was then called, Hendrick street chapel, on the following Sabbath morning, August 8th. Here, then, for the first time, he preached in Europe, selecting for his text, "The hour is come." The congregation was small; however, the sermon was accompanied with a gracious influence, and produced some excitement among the hearers, so that while he hastened away to Abbey street chapel to receive the sacrament, some of the chief members consulted together, and despatched two of their number to request him to preach again at night. He consented, on condition that it would be agreeable to the resident ministers. Permission was readily given, and that night the evangelist discoursed again, with a good degree of liberty, to a large congregation. Such was the effect produced that it was resolved to hold special services during the week, to promote a revival of the work of God. Mr. Caughey agreed to preach four nights; but at the close of these services the officials found themselves surrounded with weeping penitents, sinners being daily converted to God. The meetings were therefore continued for four weeks. A select meeting was then appointed for the young converts, and one hundred and thirty persons came forward and testified that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned all their sins. When the Rev. Thomas Waugh, the superintendent of the circuit, returned from England, and saw the amazing work of God that had taken place, he immediately sanctioned the movements of the American evangelist, expressed the fullest confidence in him, and told him to go on in his own way. From that time, therefore, until the beginning of the following year, he continued to hold special services in the various Wesleyan chapels in the metropolis, and about seven hundred persons professed to have received pardoning mercy. On preaching for the last time in Dublin, Mr. Caughey says, "The large house was crowded in every part. I had taken my farewell at two of the other chapels, and affecting seasons they were; but the scene at Abbey street surpassed anything of the kind I had ever beheld. After sermon, about thirteen hundred persons remained to bid me farewell, and they intimated most significantly that out of the

house they would not go until they had shaken hands with me. I bore up under the excitement till I thus parted with two hundred of them, chiefly young converts, but their tears and cries so affected me that I could not bear it, and excused myself from proceeding saying, I would imitate the converted Indian chief, and 'shake hands with them in my heart,' by singing—

'Amen, Amen, my soul replies ;
I'm bound to meet you in the skies,
And claim my mansion there.
Now here's my heart and here's my hand,
To meet you in that heavenly land,
Where we shall part no more.'

When this was over matters became worse and worse; I was hemmed in on every side. At last two or three brethren, in mercy, undertook to set me free; and they had a task. With much trouble they opened a small path, and through a forest of hands, I gained the street; when lo! it was lined to my home at Mr. M'Comas's. The door was surrounded with people, but some friends succeeded in pulling me into the house; yet even here there was little relief, as many were inside. The sorrowful hearts of the people at my departure, and a deep sense of my own unworthiness and utter insignificancy, crushed my spirit to the very dust." *

Of the numbers led to the Saviour during this glorious work, the following case is specially worthy of notice: A young lady from England, on a visit to some friends in the city, was induced to attend the services; the word reached her heart, and after a severe and deep repentance, God spoke peace to her soul. In the simplicity of her heart, she wrote home an account of her conversion, and desired liberty to become a member of the Methodist Society, little suspecting the manner in which her letter would be received. Her mother, a high-spirited and unconverted woman, was indignant, and wrote at once ridiculing the revival, reproaching her daughter for her weakness, forbidding her to join the Methodists, and ordering her home without delay. The young lady, alarmed and grieved at the reply she had received, sent a note to the pulpit, delicately stating her case, and requesting an interest in the prayers of the congregation for the

* Caughey's Letters, I., pp. 163-64.

conversion of her mother. This was promptly and earnestly complied with. A few days afterwards a letter came giving an account of the way God had answered believing prayer. On the very night the Lord's people pleaded at the throne of grace the mother was awakened to a sense of her sinfulness and danger. "I felt," said she, "as if I was in a furnace of fire." On the following morning the Lord had mercy on her, and she wrote asking forgiveness of her daughter, and giving her liberty to become a Methodist if she wished it, as she herself intended to do the same. Thus, as the people called God answered, and whilst they were yet speaking He heard.

Another remarkable conversion may also be noted. One Sunday evening Mr. Caughey preached in Whitefriar street chapel, from the text, "This year thou shalt die," and in prayer earnestly besought the Lord to spare for three weeks, that he might seek salvation, the man whom He was about to call into eternity. Amongst the many present was one man who had strayed into the chapel, was deeply affected, and went home convinced of sin. For some time he had had a swelling on his neck, which gave him little, if any, annoyance, but on the day following became so sore and inflamed that he was obliged to give up work and call in a physician, who pronounced it cancer. The poor man sank rapidly under this terrible disease, but continued to cry earnestly for mercy, until at length God spoke peace to his soul, and exactly three weeks from that Sabbath evening, and at the same hour in which the preacher had been engaged in prayer, the sufferer passed from time into eternity, with a hope blooming with immortality.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1842

On January 7th, 1842, the Rev. James Caughey left Dublin for Limerick, having received an official invitation to hold special services there, and was heartily welcomed by the ministers, the Revs. John F. Mathews and William P. Appelbe. He remained ten weeks in the city, preached every evening except Mondays and Saturdays, and a very gracious revival took place. One hundred and thirty persons professed to have obtained the salvation of the Gospel, about ninety united with the Methodist Church, and other Churches partook largely of the fruit of this good work. Amongst others, a woman whose husband was a Roman Catholic was induced to attend the services. The Lord powerfully awakened her to a sense of her wretched condition as a sinner; she came again and again, and at length her distress became so great that she began to agonize for salvation. Then she sprang on her feet, commenced to jump up and down, and howled in a most fearful manner, so that some persons fled in horror, others fainted, and many stood in solemn awe. "It was," says Mr. Caughey, "a terrible conflict. It seemed as if the contending powers were rending her in pieces. I believe the devil was then making a last effort to keep possession of her soul, nor can I doubt that the Holy Ghost was then in the act of casting him out. The devil rent her sore and departed. I saw her in the congregation a few nights afterwards, 'clothed and in her right mind,' as peaceful as a lamb and happy in God." A few days before the evangelist left the city he was invited to breakfast with a number of friends; and when the cloth was removed Mr. Mathews, on behalf of the Society, presented him with a valuable watch and an address, as an expression of respect for himself and their grateful appreciation of his labours.

Mr. Caughey next proceeded to Cork, where he opened his

commission on Sunday morning, March 20th, preaching to a large congregation from Isaiah xl. 31. "Many," he says, "received the word in faith and gladness, but some were prejudiced and resisted." In the evening he selected for his text Jeremiah xxiii. 19, 20, and it proved a solemn and heart-searching time. "There was a shaking, but the devil raised his signal of determined opposition. The night was spent in hard fighting, without any great advantage on either side, and hostilities ceased at about ten o'clock. We called off our troops, and so did Satan. He had some wounded, but he carried them off the battle-ground." Soon, however, the Saviour triumphed, and many glorious trophies were won in His name. Mr. Caughey remained a little more than four months in the city, and received the most hearty co-operation from the ministers of the circuit, the Revs. Fossey Tackaberry and John Greer. Similar effects were produced here to those in Dublin and Limerick. The word was mighty and prevailed, and the large communion rails were filled, night after night, with earnest seekers of salvation. James Field writes, "Such seasons I never before witnessed. Mr. Caughey is as new as the first day. If he preaches ever so often on one text, he never gives any of the old matter; he keeps his hold, and every sermon takes faster hold of the hearts of the people." Towards the close of his stay the entreaties of the people that he would remain were overpowering. Awakened sinners took the alarm; the general cry was, "Surely he will not leave us when he finds himself encompassed with penitent souls," and their tears, sobs, and subdued cries for mercy were at times profoundly awful. A meeting of the converts was held, at which nearly two hundred of them were present, but there were many others unable to attend. After a solemn and pointed address, in which their duties, responsibilities, and dangers were faithfully urged on their attention, they were called forward to the communion rails. Their names, places of residence, and the classes in which they desired to meet were noted; and they then knelt down, and were commended in prayer to the guidance and protection of the Almighty. The congregation then arose, while the young converts remained kneeling, and all sang—

"Oh, happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God!

Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad."

While the two last lines were sung those who had come forward returned to their seats, and another company came to the rails, and were prayed for and dismissed in the same way, until all had thus presented themselves at the altar of God. Before, however, Mr. Caughey bade adieu to Cork, he felt it to be his duty to deliver a few lectures on Temperance. Some battled hard for the wine-bottle, but at last nobly surrendered to the convincing arguments for teetotalism, and a flourishing society was formed, called "The Cork Young Men's Total Abstinence Society." The meetings were animated, and several of the members advocated the cause most eloquently.

Some six or eight years previous to this period Methodism had been introduced into Ballyfarnan by Mr. John Ballam, who when a lad of seventeen, through the Divine blessing on a conversation with a Methodist minister, was led to religious decision. Subsequently, at Drumshanbo, he found in Messrs. John Laird, Mark Crawford, and others kind Christian friends, from whom he learned the way of God more perfectly. From this town he went to Ballyfarnan and started business for himself. After his marriage, the Church was established in his house, where preaching and other religious services were regularly held. For years he "had it in his heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building." Through his liberality and exertions, this was accomplished, and now the top-stone was put on, to the joy of his heart. Twelve months later the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry writes, "Eighteen years, this month, since I was last in Ballyfarnan, and there was neither stick nor stone of the present village there then, save one house; now there is a neat little post and market town. On Sunday I dined with the lord of the soil, who assisted the building of the chapel considerably. We had a nice company of gentry, who all came to the service in the afternoon." For forty years Mr. Ballam was spared to care for this neat little chapel, in which many souls have been born again, to establish and superintend a flourishing Sunday-school, to watch over the Society with paternal solicitude, and to welcome the servants of God to his house.

The Revs. Robert Huston and Wallace M'Mullen were on the Kilkenny and Tipperary mission, where they had some cheering tokens of success. In one place several intelligent Romanists, through the Divine blessing on reading the Scriptures and conversation with their Wesleyan neighbours, were led to see the errors of their creed and of their ways; and although they did not then openly renounce Popery, they disbelieved the leading dogmas of the system, and gave up going to the confession. At another place a number of Roman Catholic servants and workmen regularly attended the Methodist services. The first occasion on which they did so was specially interesting. The meeting was held in a private house, and they sat in an adjoining room to that in which the congregation assembled, in order that they might not be exposed to severe ecclesiastical censure. But while the hymn beginning, "Jesus, my All in all Thou art," was sung, they approached nearer and nearer, until at last, as if "charmed by the music of His name," they entered in and mingled freely with the congregation." *

It having been arranged that a new chapel should be erected in Dublin, in place of the old one in Whitefriar street, and an excellent site having been secured in Stephen's green, the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone took place, in the presence of a vast multitude of people, on Tuesday, March 22nd. The service was commenced by the Rev. Thomas Waugh, who read two portions of Scripture, the hymn beginning, "Thou who hast in Sion laid," was sung, and the Rev. William Stewart led in prayer. The Hon. Judge Crampton then laid the stone, and having done so, stood on it, and addressed the audience on the object of the meeting—to begin the erection of a house of God, in which the great doctrines of the Gospel would be preached. Mr. Waugh explained why the building would be called the Wesleyan Centenary chapel, and gave a clear though brief history of the origin and progress of Methodism, more especially in Dublin. Part of another hymn was sung, and the Revs. William Ferguson and Walter O'Croggon concluded with prayer.†

At a meeting of the leaders of the Belfast South circuit, on February 23rd, it was moved by Mr. Edward Tucker, seconded

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, p. 262.
† *Ibid.*, 1842, p. 415.

by Mr. William Barlow, and passed, "That this meeting has heard with deep regret that the trustees of our chapel in Donegal square have announced the sale of tickets of admission to the ensuing anniversary sermons; and although the right of the trustees to make their own arrangements is freely admitted, yet the meeting feels bound to record its deliberate and conscientious opinion that such proceedings are not only impolitic, but most objectionable in principle, and contrary to the usages of Wesleyan Methodism." Allusion is here made to arrangements for sermons by the Rev. J. B. Bennett, M.D., on behalf of the Trust fund, to hear which tickets were sold. It also appears that a similar course was adopted with regard to the annual missionary meeting, and both together caused such an amount of unpleasant friction as brought on a serious attack of illness on the Rev. Frederick P. Le Maitre, the superintendent of the circuit.

For about thirteen years services had been held at Andersonstown, or Upper Falls, in a school-house with mud walls; but at a meeting of the Belfast South circuit leaders in April, it having been intimated that a suitable site had been secured for the erection of a chapel, a building committee, of which Mr. James Lindsay was secretary, was appointed to carry out the project. Shortly after this building was opened, Mr. William Beattie was appointed superintendent of the Sunday-school there, Mr. John Caruth being the secretary; but Mr. Beattie resigned in a few months, and Mr. Caruth succeeded him, with Mr. James H. Beattie as secretary. Their zealous labours, assisted by local preachers and prayer-leaders, proved a means of much good in that neighbourhood.

On the Wicklow mission of the Primitive Wesleyans a young man named John White was now engaged as a lay missionary. He was a native of Aughnacloy, where his father, a member of the Society, cultivated a farm. In early life young White became the subject of serious impressions, which under the preaching of Mr. Joseph M'Cormick deepened into saving trust and unswerving religious decision. The Divine fire thus enkindled in his soul soon found vent, for he began to proclaim in the farm-houses of his native place the love whose spell had won his heart. Affording thus promise of usefulness, he was requested to preach a trial sermon before a number of ministers; but so uncultured was he

that they concluded he would never make a preacher, and had better remain at home. However, one brother present thought they might give him a trial as a Bible-reader, which was agreed to. When informed of the decision, John White said, "If I can serve God better in that way than by preaching, I shall do so." Thus he received the above appointment, and entered upon a course of extraordinary labours and successes. Mr. John Buttle, who was in charge of the mission, having been laid aside by protracted illness, Mr. White had double work to do, and did not spare himself. Sometimes he rode twenty or thirty miles in a day, and preached three times, to meet the demands on him. Nor did he labour in vain. The Lord made bare His arm in the salvation of souls, and the congregations greatly increased, more especially at Arklow, where the usual place of preaching was quite too small for the congregations.

The Queen's County mission was visited by a Mr. Toomath, and in one place the novelty of a blind man preaching excited so much interest that the friends considered it necessary to provide additional forms to accommodate those who wished to hear. A person therefore went to the sexton of the Roman Catholic chapel to borrow a few, and, with the consent of the priest, obtained them. Several Romanists, who knew this, concluded that there could be no objection to their attending the meeting, and accordingly went. While listening to the sermon, two of them were deeply convinced of sin, and forthwith gave up attending mass. One of the two, a young man, resolved to go to church, and his mother having heard it, became alarmed, used all her powers to dissuade him, and failing in this, pelted him with stones, knelt down and gave him her curse. The persecution became so great that he was obliged to leave the town. The other convert was a young woman, who became a member of the Society. Her father came to her and inquired, "Will you still persist in your course, and allow me to receive the treatment I met with yesterday on your account?" "What treatment?" she asked. "I went to the priest to confess, and in place of hearing me, he flogged me." The parent then pressed his daughter to give up going to preaching while he lived, and said after that she might do as she pleased. "Father," she replied, "I may be dead before you. When I was living in sin I met with no opposition; but now, when

I take the Word of God for my guide, I must be persecuted." And she continued steady, "in nothing terrified." *

On Sunday, June 5th, a new Primitive Wesleyan chapel at Castlecaulfield was opened for Divine worship. In the morning the Rev. Adam Averell preached from Matthew xxii. 13, and it was a source of devout gratitude that notwithstanding his advanced age and consequent infirmities, his voice was as strong and his intellect as clear as they had been for many years, while his fervent appeals to the consciences of his hearers made a deep and lasting impression. In the evening the pulpit was occupied by Mr. Dawson D. Heather, who discoursed with much eloquence and power from 2 Chronicles vi. 40, 41. The services of the day were concluded by Mr. Alexander Stewart, who offered up a most impressive prayer that the Lord's blessing might be vouchsafed to the ministry of His word in this house.†

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference was held in Dublin. The preparatory committees began their meetings on Tuesday, June 21st, and of these one was appointed to review the concerns of the Irish Missions. Of this committee Mr. William M'Arthur was a member, and had the courage to propose that the daily schools should be placed under the National Board of Education, thus securing £5,000 per annum to the Connexion, while the £3,000 granted from England might be employed in the erection of new buildings; but the Society was too fully committed to opposition to the Board then to accept this wise proposal, and the representatives from England were even more strongly against it. Mr. Newton said, "If this is passed you will see my face no more in Ireland." Mr. M'Arthur, however, waited his time, and after a number of years, had the satisfaction of carrying his scheme.

The Conference commenced on June 24th. The Rev. James Dixon was President, and he was accompanied by the Revs. Robert Newton and John Scott. On making this appointment the British Conference had deviated from its usual form. From the year 1814 to 1840 the appointment of the President in England to preside in Ireland was so expressed as to allow him to name a substitute, "if unavoidably prevented" from taking the office himself. But this year no reference was made to a substitute,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1842, p. 229.
† *Ibid*, pp. 313-15.

and thus it continued, year after year, until 1863, when the alternative was again very properly restored. The Conference was favoured with the presence of Bishop Soule and the Rev. Thomas B. Sargent, representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church, America. During the year only one publicly recognized minister had died, the Rev. Thomas W. Doolittle of Sligo, who was greatly respected and beloved by all who knew him, and who maintained his confidence in God and the rejoicing of his hope firm unto the end. The Rev. Robert Masaroon was elected by nomination a member of the Legal Hundred in his place, and the Rev. William Crook by seniority instead of the Rev. Henry Deery, superannuated. John Higgins of the Ballina circuit and John K. Johnston, son of the Rev. James Johnston, were received on trial. It was cheering to learn that the Great Head of the Church had accompanied the labours of His servants with great success. Notwithstanding the numerous opposing influences with which the Society had to contend, and the loss of eight hundred and sixty-nine members by emigration, there was a net increase in the membership of three hundred and sixty-two. The mission schools had prospered, their number being fifty-two, with more than four thousand scholars. The different Connexional funds had also been increased, the addition to the Missionary Fund alone being about £400. Local missionary deputations, consisting of two ministers on each district, were appointed for the first time, and the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry was elected junior representative to the British Conference.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced its sessions on June 29th. Owing to advanced age and increasing infirmities, the Rev. Adam Averell was for the first time absent, and his place was supplied by the Vice-President, Mr. Alexander Stewart. Mr. George Robinson was elected Secretary. William Gunne of Maguiresbridge was received as having travelled twelve months; and John Graham of Omagh, William Burns of the Newtownstewart circuit, William H. Graham of the Banbridge mission, John Henning of Rathfryland, and John White were admitted on trial. It was reported that on many of the circuits and missions the Lord had been pleased to pour out His Spirit and revive His work, so that, notwithstanding a serious loss by emigration, there was a net increase in the membership of one hundred and five. Before,

however, the Conference closed, the Secretary took seriously ill, and the disease developed into typhus fever, under which he rapidly sank. His mind was kept in perfect peace, and on July 13th, in the thirty-second year of his age and the twelfth of his ministry, he entered that region where pain and sickness are unknown.

For a long time the minds of the members of the Primitive Wesleyan Society were much impressed with the necessity of erecting a house of worship at Warrenpoint. In 1836 a suitable site was secured by Mr. Addy, a subscription-list opened, and the foundation-stone laid; but the work went on very slowly for some time. At length, however, it was completed, and the building was opened for public services on August 7th. Mr. James Robinson, jun., preached in the morning, and Mr. Dawson D. Heather in the afternoon and evening. The congregations were large, the collections considerable, and the Lord gave His blessing with the preaching of the word.*

Another new Primitive Wesleyan chapel was also erected at Gledstown, near Maguiresbridge, and that with a speed that is in striking contrast to the delay at Warrenpoint. It was commenced on August 1st, and opened for Divine worship on Sunday, December 18th, being thus completed in about four months and a half. Sermons were preached by Messrs. James Morrow and John Wherry, the congregations were large, and the collections good. However, as a considerable debt remained, a tea-meeting was subsequently held, at which the balance against the Society was considerably reduced.†

On Saturday, July 30th, Mr. Caughey left Cork for Bandon, where he opened his commission on the day following, and continued for nearly three months, preaching four nights in each week, and twice on the Sabbath. On August 29th he writes, "The revival is going on very slowly here;" and on September 26th, "A few have been converted to God. The influence on the Wesleyan Church is very gracious indeed, but the inhabitants generally seem as yet unmoved. The congregations are tolerable, but our doings or sayings excite but very little interest beyond the families of Methodism." And again, on October 3rd, "We

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1842, p. 470.

† *Ibid*, 1843, p. 65.

have had hitherto a very hard conflict in Bandon, the hardest in which I have ever been engaged. Last Sabbath, however, was a glorious day to many. We had a select meeting for the young converts, and forty-four persons came forward and testified that during the last four weeks God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven their sins. I have witnessed nothing like it since the commencement of the special services. Many of the old members were bathed in tears, and towards the close of the service a large number of awakened sinners approached the Communion rail and knelt to be prayed for. Their cries for mercy were piercing. This happy hour amply repaid me for all my tears, and groans, and labours during these last nine weeks." But on October 28th he says, "The revival, during the remainder of my stay in Bandon, advanced with a slowness that distressed me. I felt as if there were something wrong and deeply grievous to the Holy Spirit somewhere; perhaps the day of judgment will alone reveal it. On Sabbath, the 16th inst., twenty additional persons came forward as witnesses to the blessing of justification through faith in the merits of Christ." Although this visit of the earnest evangelist did not in its apparent results come up to his expectations, yet much permanent good was done. Amongst those led to religious decision was Mr. John Dawson* of Mountpleasant, who for upwards of forty-three years subsequently walked in the fear of the Lord, and then, in a good old age, passed to the home above. There was also a Mrs. Stanley, who one night had a dream that she was going down a lane, and was stopped by a man who warned her that she was going to the pit of fire, put his arm around her, and brought her back. While in the act of narrating this to her husband on the following morning, she suddenly stopped, and pointing to a stranger passing the window, said, "There is the man." It was Mr. Caughey. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley were thus led for the first time to attend a Methodist service, and then to give their hearts to God. Within a few weeks afterwards they each passed home to heaven. Of those stirred up to more active work in connection with this revival, was Mortlock Long, then a young man of eighteen. He says that on thus engaging in public service one of the leaders said to him, "You are now beginning to preach: hold up the Saviour; let not so much as your

* Grandson of Richard Dawson. *Vide.* i. p. 368.

little finger be seen. He that lies low need fear no fall." And this important counsel made a deep, lasting, and salutary impression on his mind.

The Rev. Robert Huston was appointed to Youghal, and here he soon found himself in conflict with the superstitions and frauds of the votaries of Rome. Within six miles of the town, a "pattern" was held annually and attended by eager crowds, that generally closed the day in scenes of drunkenness and disorder. The missionary believing that well-placed ridicule is often a more effective weapon in combating error than laboured arguments, composed a description of the day in homely rhyme, more especially referring to the finale, when—

> "They danced and they sung,
> Or they smote with the fist or they cursed with the tongue."

Large numbers of copies were scattered broadcast, and did much to bring the custom into ridicule. Near to Youghal there were two establishments—one a female reformatory, and the other a school for training "missioners," superintended by an Irish ecclesiastic, assisted by a French priest. Suddenly it was announced that one of the inmates of the reformatory had become the subject of an *estatica*, one of the reputed miracles that occurred so frequently on the Continent. One Thursday evening she professed to be bound with cords by some invisible power; on Friday stigmas, or marks resembling those on the body of our Lord, appeared on her person. She then lay as if dead until the Sunday morning, when, as representing the resurrection, she rose up and went to mass. It having eked out that while no charge was made for seeing the miracle, donations were acceptable, suspicion was at once excited that it was a mode of "raising the wind" to aid the college and reformatory. Protestant indignation was thoroughly aroused. The rector of the parish invited the Protestant ministers of the town for consultation, and the result was a united public protest, affectionately but strongly worded, against the *estatica*, as "a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit." Certain of the Romish clergy, with the editor of the *Tablet*, having examined into it, pronounced it an impious fraud, which the girl in question attempted to practise on the unsuspecting priest and the public. Another protest was issued, and then a ballad lampooning the whole affair. This produc-

tion, not less, perhaps, than the grave protests, contributed to expose and defeat the iniquitous procedure. The following verses are specimens:—

"Each Friday ere three,
Make haste unto me.
The girl shall bleed at my bidding, you'll see;
But you must bleed too,
Or else it won't do,
So great is my fatherly goodness to you!

"My curse on the crew—
Green, orange, and blue—
Who would not believe what I said to be true.
The nice yellow clay
Don't come in my way;
This safe speculation don't promise to pay.

"My brother from France
Thought in triumph to dance,
But now with vexation he's ready to prance;
So tearing his hair,
He must pack up his ware,
And seek for a gullible public elsewhere."

For issuing this, the priest from the altar vigorously denounced Mr. Huston, and an anonymous letter streaked with blood was sent to him, threatening serious consequences; but he committed himself to the care of Him who judgeth righteously, and suffered no harm, while within a year the Irish ecclesiastic drooped and died, the French priest fled as from the plague, and one of the institutions was broken up.

In autumn Frederick Elliott, who had been placed on the list of reserve at the Conference, was requested to go to Mallow, to take charge of a school there, which the Congregational minister gave up, and wished the Methodists to work. Here he not only instructed the scholars, but conducted religious services regularly, and the Lord blessed the labours of the young preacher, so that the congregations were soon more than doubled.

The Rev. William Reilly was appointed to Waterford, with, as his colleague, the Rev. John Williams, "a kind and sensible man, a most agreeable fellow-labourer, and an eloquent and gifted preacher." They spent two years together on the circuit, and saw the work prosper. The residences of the ministers were opposite

each other and at right angles with the chapel, thus forming a small courtyard. Though the preaching-house did not occupy a prominent site, it was central and very convenient for seafaring men. They generally held prayer-meetings on Sunday afternoons, which were attended with tokens of Divine favour. One day a young sailor, in leading in prayer, pleaded with great pathos that if any should have to meet sudden death it might prove to be sudden glory. On the day following he went to sea, and before the day closed was washed overboard and drowned! In the city were many kind and warm-hearted friends, and none more so than Mr. Tobias Wilson. His wife, who had died six years previously, was a lady of exalted piety and warm attachment to Methodism. Their son Thomas, "a Methodist of the real type," was moulded into his mother's character. He was a local preacher, and in 1831 had built a chapel in Tramore, in which he kept up Sunday services for many years, the ministers of the circuit preaching there on week-evenings to good congregations. The Dean, a kind-hearted and amiable clergyman, was favourable to Methodism, and frequently took the chair at missionary meetings. The site of the chapel in Clonmel was held by a lease renewable for ever, which had nearly lapsed, so that no little difficulty was felt in securing the premises. However, a lease in perpetuity was obtained, and a new and beautiful chapel erected, which was opened under cheering circumstances.*

Mr. James Collier, whose name had been placed by the Conference on the list of reserve, was sent to labour in a large district between the Sligo and Ballina circuits, called the barony of Leyny. He visited all the country round, making Ballymote his head-quarters, secured twenty-eight monthly preaching-places, and spent his Sundays at Achonry, Coolaney, Collooney, and Ballysadare. At Achonry he was kindly received by the curate, who placed at his disposal, for religious services, the school-house, which was "crowded inside and out." Some one present remarked, "This is the first preaching we have had since Gideon Ouseley was here." This mission was continued for several years, then left to the Primitive Wesleyans, and at length completely abandoned.

One fine summer evening the 83rd Regiment of Infantry marched into Armagh, and was quartered in the barracks. On

* Unpublished MSS. of the Rev. William Reilly.

the following Sunday the schoolmaster-sergeant, a devoted Methodist, asked permission of the commanding officer to take the children of the school to the Methodist chapel. Leave was at once granted, and accordingly the scholars were marched to the Wesleyan service. This came to the ears of the curate of the parish, and he called at the school, and inquired why the children had not been taken to church. The sergeant replied, "They were marched to church, although not to the cathedral on the top of the hill." "Then," said the curate, "I will lodge a complaint with the commanding officer." "Very well, sir," answered the other; "but I request you will allow me to be present when you do so, for I had the colonel's permission for what I did." The clergyman promised, but omitted to fulfil his engagement, for the colonel sent for the sergeant, and told him of the complaint. However, he did not accuse him of any breach of military discipline, but merely said, as it was a cathedral city, and the Primate was very attentive to the officers, he desired the scholars to be taken to church. "But, sir," replied the schoolmaster, "I don't belong to that denomination, and a considerable number of the scholars are children of Methodist soldiers, who don't wish their children to be sent to the cathedral." "Well, then," said the colonel, "let the Methodist soldiers, if they wish, take their children with them to the Methodist chapel." And this arrangement was carried out as long as the regiment remained in Armagh.*

* Lynn's Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, p. 117.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1843.

The ministers of the Established Church appear at this period in many instances to have entered upon a course of open hostility to Methodism, denouncing the Society in strong terms from the pulpit, in the press, and in pastoral intercourse with their people. Allusion is made to this in more than one Address to the British Conference, as "a deep, widespread, and systematic opposition, not characterized, like the hostility of former times, by avowed disregard of Evangelical principles, but formed under the profession of supreme respect for Scriptural truth, Christian morality, and ecclesiastical order." One of those who took a prominent part in this opposition was the Rev. F. F. Trench, perpetual curate of Cloughjordan, who as editor of the *Christian Journal* wrote a series of articles, in which he charged the Methodists with "pious frauds," mercenary motives in their labours, living immoral lives, holding "unsound and faulty" religious views, and aiming "at producing excitement," by which "the people were led to substitute strong emotions for the operations of the Holy Ghost." He, however, was met and ably answered in a pamphlet by Mr. George Revington. The Rev. John Liddy, then in Kerry, also issued a brochure on "Apostolical Succession and the Constitution of the Christian Church," in reply to charges made against Methodists and Methodism on his mission.

The Primitive Wesleyan Society in Dublin sustained a severe loss in the death of Mr. William Curry, who in 1785 had been appointed a leader by the venerated Wesley, and for fifty-eight years continued to discharge the duties of his office with punctuality, zeal, and perseverance. He was also a faithful visitor of the hospitals, infirmaries, and jails of the city, ministering to the inmates the word of salvation, and leading at least two criminals,

condemned to death, to the Fountain of life. On Saturday, January 14th, 1843, the illness of which he died commenced, and he spoke of the Lord having favoured him with a remarkable manifestation of His presence. As the disease became worse, though subject to occasional wanderings of mind, he was always clear and collected as to his religious experience. When one of his children repeated the words, "God so loved the world," he finished the verse himself, with an evident appropriation of its consolations, and added—

> "My flesh shall slumber in the ground
> Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,
> Then burst the chains, with sweet surprise,
> And in my Saviour's image rise."

His last audible words were, "I am going to my Saviour, and will soon be with Him;" but often after this he, with uplifted eyes, would endeavour to utter, "My Saviour!" On Saturday, the 21st, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, his spirit took its last triumphant flight, "from Calvary's to Zion's height." *

Messrs Joseph M'Cormick and John G. Wakeham were appointed to the Enniskillen circuit, where, in answer to special and persevering prayer, there was a very extensive and blessed religious awakening. At first an increasing attendance on the ministry of the word was observed, and in some instances a marked seriousness in the congregations. At the December love-feast there was a considerable addition to the ordinary attendance; but nothing further that was remarkable took place, except that at the close of the meeting a few anxious inquirers, including an old man of nearly seventy, professed to have found peace in believing. However, on the following Sabbath evening, as Mr. Wakeham preached, the Lord poured out His Spirit, a number were constrained to cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" and six of them were enabled to rejoice in the God of their salvation. On the same evening, as Mr. M'Cormick preached at Knockmanoul, the word was accompanied with similar power and attended with similar results. The good work thus commenced continued and spread, meetings were held every evening, and at almost all of these sinners were convinced of sin and converted to God, until it was estimated that not less than five hundred persons

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, pp. 96—104.

had been turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."*

The Clones circuit, on which Messrs. Richard Robinson and John White were stationed, was favoured with similar times of refreshing. The revival began at the September lovefeast, when about twenty persons professed to have obtained rest for their weary souls through faith in Christ. The preachers and leaders were greatly encouraged and quickened, and left the meeting inspired with increased zeal for God. Soon the services they conducted told with blessed results to those who attended them. This was especially the case at Monaghan, where the cause had been very low for many years. At the March quarterly meeting in this town about three hundred persons were present; the people spoke with such freedom that Mr. Robinson with difficulty was enabled to conclude this part of the service, and when an invitation was given to those who felt their need of redemption in the blood of Christ to express it, about one-third of the congregation knelt down and pleaded for Heaven's mercy. There was scarcely any part of the circuit where good was not done, no week passed without several conversions, and in April it was considered that at least two hundred had professed to have decided for God. Some of the classes were nearly doubled, others greatly augmented, and some new ones formed.†

A very extensive and blessed religious awakening also took place on the Maguiresbridge circuit. One Sunday evening a little girl, the daughter of Mr. Robert Orr of Ballyreagh, while singing hymns, became suddenly and strangely affected, was put to bed, and on regaining consciousness began at once to praise God. Such was the impression made on the mind of her father that, on the following morning, he sent for a brother prayer-leader, John Grainger, and they arranged at once to hold a prayer-meeting. This was so largely attended and accompanied with such Divine power that services were continued night after night. Grainger was joined by another prayer-leader, James M'Clintock, and through the blessing of God on the labours of these devoted men, the work spread in all directions, and the whole country was roused. Topped Mountain, Tempo, Ratoran,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, pp. 151, 227.

† *Ibid*, pp. 228-29.

and Pubble were all greatly quickened, while at Ballyreagh there was not a Protestant family unblest. James M'Clintock, the principal agent in this glorious work, was a young man of superior natural ability, mighty in the Scriptures, and intensely earnest. Amongst those converted were James Wilson, James Edwards, and Andrew Armstrong of Ballyreagh, and Thomas Hurst of Topped Mountain, all of whom subsequently entered the itinerancy. The superintendent of the circuit, Mr. William Beatty, writes, "Our March quarterly meetings were all greatly owned of God. We held five of them, not one of which was unattended with signal good. Between forty and fifty persons professed to have received the blessing of pardon." * This good work, and consequent lack of sufficient accommodation for those who desired to attend the services, led to the erection of the chapel at Pubble.

"In January" the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry "preached the anniversary sermon for the chapel in Tanderagee; collections, £28." Such is the brief record given by his biographer, yet at that service a noble trophy was won for Christ, for Charles Lynn Grant was then and there led to religious decision. He was born in the neighbourhood of Terryhoogan in 1823. Under the watchful care of pious parents, he grew up in the fear of the Lord, and at an early period became a member of the class in which they met. As he approached manhood, prevented by severe physical suffering from taking his share in the labours of his father's farm, he sought in reading occupation for his earnest spirit, and thus laid the foundation of his subsequent extensive knowledge. His affliction, however, served a still better end. Being much alone, serious thought and self-examination led to an earnest desire for the blessings of religion, until he was enabled to rejoice in a clear sense of the Divine favour, and then he began to work for Christ, manifesting a growing desire to bring sinners to the Saviour.

In the neighbourhood of Ballinamallard many changes had recently taken place, more especially by emigration; and amongst those thus lost to the Society was the large family of the Blacks of Lettermoney, with the exception of one daughter, Mrs. Robert Graham, whom with her husband, the steward of the circuit, resided in the old homestead. Here, one morning in February,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Magazine*, 1843, p. 230.

during family worship, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out, and several members of the household cried aloud for Heaven's mercy. Thus a blessed religious awakening commenced, and spread from house to house, bringing into the classes eventually not less than two hundred new members, including several who became acceptable and useful leaders, and at least one, John R. Porter of Derry, near Trillick, who subsequently entered the itinerancy.

The Rev. John Hadden was superintendent of the Tullamore circuit. The Rev. William Crook, D.D., says of him, "He was an admirable preacher of the old school, clear, terse, pointed, particularly rich in the theology of the heart, and at times highly impassioned and effective. Of some of his sermons I have the most vivid impressions—two particularly; one on 'Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always and by all means,' and another, which, alas! proved to be his last, on Elisha's parting request to Elijah, 'I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.' The sermon was a noble one, full of thought, fire, and power. I see the venerable preacher now, his face literally glowing with a radiance that would remind one of Stephen, as he saw the heavens opened and the victor's crown all but placed upon his brow. An apostle might have closed his ministry with such a discourse." On the following Tuesday or Wednesday he left for the country, and after a few days, his colleague, the Rev. William Starkey, brought him home to die. His death was beautifully in harmony with his life. He was a thorough pastor, and felt the ruling passion strong in death. Some of his last words were, "Take care of my dear people." "Mind the morning meetings." "I feel that the hand of death is upon me, but I am not afraid." * His name is now worthily represented in the Methodism of Dublin, Wexford, and Skibbereen.

In spring Frederick Elliott was requested to go to Dublin, and supply the place of Mr. Norwood, whose health had failed, and says he never met a people with whom he had more happiness, and in preaching to whom he had greater peace, comfort, and liberty.

On Sunday, June 4th, the Rev. Thomas Waugh conducted the opening service in premises in Hardwicke street which had been used as a Jesuit chapel, purchased from the Roman Catholics, and

* Memorials of the Rev. W. Crook, sen., pp. 117-18.

fitted up for a Methodist place of worship or preaching-room, with an upper story set apart as a residence for a supernumerary. There was a large congregation, and Mr. Waugh preached from "Thou art Peter," etc.

Two weeks later the opening services of the Centenary chapel were conducted by the Rev. Jabez Bunting, D.D., and Robert Newton, D.D. The former preached in the morning, and the latter, from 1 Timothy iii. 16, in the evening. It was estimated that two thousand persons were present, including three judges, the Lord Mayor, and several Members of Parliament, and the collection amounted to £200. Writing to his daughter, Dr. Bunting says, "The chapel is exceedingly beautiful, in one of the largest squares of Dublin, and both as to architecture and locality, worthy of the Centenary from which it derives its name. On Monday morning five hundred people breakfasted in the room under it. On the afternoon of the same day—at the earnest invitation of Judge Jackson—Mr. Waugh, Dr. Newton, and I went to his country seat at Howth, eight miles hence, and had a delightful ramble, under his guidance, among the hills, surrounded by exquisitely fine marine scenery, and took dinner with him and his family. We were charmed with all we saw and heard." Dr. Newton preached again on Wednesday, June 21st, and on the following Sabbath the Rev. Dr. Alder preached at noon, and Dr. Bunting in the evening.

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Belfast, and commenced its sittings on June 23rd. The Rev. John Hannah, D.D., presided, and he was accompanied by the Revs. Dr. Newton, Joseph Cusworth, and Dr. Alder. Ninety ministers were present, and on no former occasion was this assembly characterized by more unity and Christian love, attachment to the doctrines and discipline of Methodism, and zeal for the glory of God. It appeared that during the year three ministers had died; two of them, the Rev. Samuel Wood and the Rev. John Hadden, had been faithfully and acceptably engaged in the work of the ministry for upwards of forty years; while the third, William Gibson of the Castleblayney and Monaghan circuit, had been called away, amidst the promise of much usefulness, in the second year of his itinerancy. The Rev. John Nelson was elected by nomination a member of the Legal Hundred in the place of Mr. Hadden,

and the Rev. Richard Phillips by seniority instead of the Rev. David Waugh, superannuated. John C. Storey of Corlisbrattan, Frederick Elliott, James Collier, and Thomas Foster were received on trial. Notwithstanding a loss by emigration alone of nearly five hundred members of the Society, after filling up all vacancies, there was reported an increase of three hundred and seventy-four. The Rev. Robert Masaroon was elected junior Representative to the British Conference, and the Rev. Henry Price appointed Secretary to the Contingent Fund, an office which he sustained with fidelity and zeal for sixteen years. The ministry of the word in the town and neighbourhood, on which large congregations attended, was accompanied with peculiar unction from on high. The Rev. James Morgan, of the Presbyterian Church, having kindly offered the use of his spacious meeting-house, as being larger than any of the Wesleyan chapels in Belfast, it was occupied on the Sabbath evening and the following Wednesday by Dr. Newton, who preached on each occasion to a numerous and deeply attentive audience.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference began on June 28th, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Stewart, with Mr. Thomas M'Fann as Secretary. In addition to Mr. George Robinson, to whom reference has been made, there was reported the death of the venerable William Boyle in his ninetieth year, and his end was peace. Five candidates were received on trial, including Arthur H. Connell of Cork, Thomas A. Jones of Belfast, and Alexander Campbell of the Irvinestown circuit. After filling up all vacancies in the membership occasioned by deaths, emigration, and religious declensions, there was found to be an increase of one thousand and thirty-three. Mr. M'Fann having retired from the office of Travelling Secretary, and received an expression of the approval of the Conference of the way in which he had performed the duties of the office, Mr. Dawson D. Heather was appointed his successor; and the manner and spirit in which he discharged the arduous duties of his position for eighteen years prove that the confidence of his brethren was not misplaced. Petitions were forwarded to the Houses of Parliament, expressing the decided and deliberate conviction of the members of the Conference that the movement then in progress for the repeal of the Union aimed not only at the dismemberment of the

empire, but also at the subversion of the Established Church of this country and all other Churches founded on the principles of the Reformation, and praying that measures might be enacted to quiet agitation and preserve inviolate the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Union.

Mr. Samuel Larminie now concluded three years' labour on the Youghal mission, where he had toiled with great zeal and success, taking his stand in the streets, Sabbath after Sabbath, and preaching to the people in their own language. Among the fruits of his labours was the conversion of Mr. Murphy, who had charge of the monks' school, and came right out from Popery, and subsequently entered the ministry of the Established Church. The Methodist preacher, however, was not permitted to proceed in his work unmolested. Placards were posted over the town denouncing him, and so infuriated the mob that they followed him in the streets, pelted him with stones, and but for the interference of the military, would have killed him. Notwithstanding this opposition, many Romanists heard the glad tidings of salvation from his lips, and were turned from darkness to light.*

The very cheering religious awakening at Clones, through the Divine blessing on the labours of Messrs. Richard Robinson and John White, continued to deepen and extend. At the end of September the former reports that the revival which had begun there twelve months previously still continued and proved increasing fruitful. "Since July," says Mr. Robinson, "not less than two hundred have been added to our Society, and most of them profess to have found redemption through the blood of Christ. Our leaders are more alive now than at any former period since the work commenced, and such is the spirit of hearing that our places for preaching are generally crowded. We had lately a tea-meeting in one of our country places, where nearly two hundred were present; this service did not close until after one o'clock on the following morning, and many professed to have experienced the pardoning love of God. This is now so common at our meetings that we have long since ceased to reckon the number of those who make such a profession." †

A similar cheering work had also begun, early in the year, on

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1864, pp. 89-91.

† *Ibid*, 1843, pp. 458-59.

the Derrygonnelly circuit, where Messrs. John Wherry and James Robinson, sen., were stationed. The first indications of this blessed awakening were at Rossmacawinny, where the places of meeting were filled to overflowing. Divine power accompanied the word preached, and a large number were brought into Christian liberty. Then at Drumduff the Spirit was poured out, and many more became reconciled to God through the Son of His love. While thus the Lord revived His work in the south of the circuit, the north was not without similar tokens of His favour. At Blackslee the people attended in large numbers, and very many were converted to God. These included Wesleyans as well as Primitives, but all agreed to sink their peculiar distinctions for the time being and unite in the great work of saving souls, the converts being left at liberty to choose with which denomination of Methodists they would identify themselves. Of all the places, however, in this circuit that were visited from on high, most good appears to have been done at Shankhill. So deep and wide-spread was the work that vital religion became the general subject of conversation through the whole surrounding country, and the people assembled in crowds from all directions. The quarterly meetings at Drumduff and Derrygonnelly were seasons of great power. At the latter the penitents were so numerous and so anxious that the preachers had to leave them with the leaders, while they themselves retired to the market-house to settle financial business; and three times in succession at Drumduff an attempt was made in vain to conclude the service.*

At Portadown the Society had long felt the want of a chapel, and a meeting of local friends of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism having been summoned, it was unanimously resolved that a house should be built. One old leader who was present said that he had met a class in the town for twenty years, and on the previous Sabbath they had met in a turf-shed. A subscription-list was opened, and about one hundred pounds subscribed. The foundation-stone of the new building was laid in February, and the opening services conducted on Sunday, September 24th. The Rev. Adam Averell delivered an appropriate address in the morning, Mr. Revington preached in the afternoon, and Mr. Adam Ford in the evening. At the close of these services Mr.

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, pp. 456-58.

Ford gave an account of the blessed revival he had witnessed on the Irvinestown circuit, during the course of which about five hundred were added to the Society. The first lovefeast in the new edifice was held on October 8th, when the house was well filled, and at least nine souls were won for Christ.*

The Revs. Gibson M'Millen and James Collier were stationed at Clones, which was a very laborious circuit, including a large district of country, with many stopping-places. Mr. M'Millen frequently referred to his labour here as a fair specimen of the early itinerancy, saying, "While at Clones I was in the saddle three hundred and sixty-five days in the year." The Wesleyans shared to some extent in the benefits of the revival with which their Primitive brethren were favoured through the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. White. Many of those awakened to religious concern attended the Sunday-evening services, responded promptly to invitations to come forward to the communion rails, and some obtained the pardoning mercy of God.

As has been already stated, the division of Belfast into two circuits—South and North—was the cause of some misunderstandings and disputes. The Conference, therefore, judged it prudent to appoint the Rev. William Stewart to Donegal square circuit, and the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry to Frederick street, as ministers who would work together, heal the breaches, and keep all right. Both circuits had petitioned the Conference for the Rev. J. B. Gillman, and would have no one else; but he was wanted for Dublin. The Conference therefore took the matter into its own hands, and the results proved the wisdom of the course adopted, for almost immediately on his arrival Mr. Tackaberry's ministry was blessed to the people. During his first month on the circuit he writes, "Several found mercy at the prayer-meetings in Frederick street and Ballymacarret. If God give us such meetings as these we shall have much cause of joy." The circuit under his care comprised sixty-three classes, with eight hundred members. Referring to the misunderstandings that had existed, he says, "The civil war is abating. There are no colonels, and battles cannot be fought without commanders. In plainer language, the preachers are resolved there shall be no

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, pp. 461-63.

South and North circuits heard of. We meet once a week, do everything by united counsels, occupy each other's pulpits every four weeks, and the consequence is our circuit differences are settling down, and will, I think, entirely subside. There is still a little ground-swell; but while the pilots understand each other I hope there will be no great danger, even if a storm should again arise." Other matters also occupied the attention of Mr. Tackaberry. Hence he writes, "We have got the lease of ground for a small chapel in Shankhill completed. Now for the chapel itself. And we have got the lease of ground for a mission-school in Ligoniel perfected, which ground I asked five years ago. Mr. Croggon is in town, with plan and specification, and in all the rain we go there to-day at three o'clock. I hope the building will be finished in four months." *

The Revs. Thomas Ballard and William Burnside were appointed to the Lisburn circuit, where the Lord greatly blessed their labours. A younger brother of the Rev. James Collier, Robert, was at this time a young man of nineteen, and resided in the old homestead at Ballynacoy. During the revival here, eight years previously, he had obtained justifying grace, but through unfaithfulness, soon lost it. Now he was startled from the spiritual insensibility into which he had fallen by the powerful preaching of Mr. Ballard, and led to seek earnestly restoration to the joys of salvation. One evening, at the close of the usual preaching service, Mr. Burnside requested him to remain, with a few leaders, and then appointed him and another young man to meet a class that had no leader. He consented to go and sing, but do nothing more. However, when the class met the other refused to do anything but lead in prayer, so Robert Collier had to take charge of the service, much to his own dissatisfaction. Deeply impressed with a sense of his sinfulness and utter unfitness for the work, he gave himself to prayer, and during the following week was enabled to rest on Jesus as his Saviour, and thus rejoice in the God of his salvation. In all the ardour of first love, he commenced Christian work, especially holding prayer-meetings. The first of these was in a building that had been used as a public-house. The owner having been laid aside by injury received in a drunken quarrel, and led to serious reflection, resolved to give

* Life and Labours of Tackaberry, pp. 242-45.

up the drink traffic and give himself to the Lord. The sign-board was therefore taken down, and Mr. Collier invited to conduct meetings on the Sunday afternoon. At the next place in which the young convert held services he attempted to preach, and was encouraged by a man who was present rising up and giving glory to God for the blessing of pardon which he had then and there obtained. Thus Robert Collier began his career of earnest and successful work for Christ. It was during Mr. Ballard's appointment to this circuit that his son John Woods was converted to God, and thus also entered on a course of extensive usefulness.

In Sligo a very vigorous effort was made by some of the episcopal clergy, aided by landlords and their agents, to root out Methodism from the county. By means of gross misrepresentation, foul slander, and even persecution, it was thought to accomplish the wicked purpose. This was particularly the case in the parish of Ballysadare, so that some of the leaders said to the Rev. John Donald, the junior preacher of the circuit, "Such are the aspersions thrown on Methodism here that unless you defend us we may give up." He replied, "Mr. Le Maitre is my superintendent. I shall speak to him, and if he does not take the matter up, and leaves it with me, I shall undertake the defence." Mr. Le Maitre, though a gentleman of much culture and an excellent preacher, was timid, inclined to look at the dark side of things, and unwilling to engage in such a controversy. He therefore replied, "The rector is not openly taking a part in this opposition; it is only his curates; you are my curate, and can defend Methodism against them." "Then I will do my best," said Mr. Donald, and at once arranged to deliver a public lecture in Ballysadare, with this object in view. It was the depth of winter, the snow was deep on the ground, and a large number assembled in a loft of Mr. John Young, where they had scarcely standing room. Mr. Donald took as his motto, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say;" and many a laugh there was through the circuit subsequently about "the wise men of Ballysadare." The lecturer had no difficulty in proving that the doctrinal teaching and organization of Methodism were Scriptural, and that it had taken a foremost place amongst the agencies raised up by Providence for the good of the country, and even in replying to the

various objections that had been made to the Society. Thus the courage of the people rose, and their hands were strengthened, so that no more was heard of at least some of the misstatements that had been freely circulated.*

* Unpublished Narrative of the Rev. John Donald, D.D.

CHAPTER XXV.

1844.

For a considerable time a growing feeling existed in the minds of leading ministers and laymen in Ireland that something ought to be done in the way of providing for Methodists a higher class of education than that afforded by the ordinary daily schools. In June, 1839, the Rev. Thomas Waugh writes, "I found Messrs. Gillman, Ferguson, and Stewart in Dublin, waiting to secure my attendance at a breakfast meeting, which I attended, to consider the propriety and practicability of establishing a school on the Sheffield principle." * And at the succeeding Conference a committee was appointed to meet a number of lay gentlemen to consult as to the establishment of such an institution; but these letters and meetings led to little result, except the deepening of the conviction that something of the kind should be attempted. At length, at a breakfast-party in Portadown, in 1843, Mr. Thomas A. Shillington read a letter which he had received from the Rev. John K. Johnston, A.B., urging the necessity of a similar school in Ireland, to the Wesleyan College at Taunton. The Rev. Robert G. Cather, A.B., happened to be present, and was greatly impressed with the idea. Mr. Shillington encouraged him to take it up with a view to its practical application, promising his earnest co-operation, and thus the scheme was soon fairly started. On May 16th, 1844, a number of ministers and lay gentlemen met in Belfast, and formed a provisional committee, with the Rev. William Stewart as chairman, and Messrs. Shillington and Cather as secretaries. A prospectus was at once issued, stating that the proprietary of the school should consist of from one to two hundred shares of £10 each, what the proposed course of study would be, and the terms, and requesting information as to the encouragement that would be

* Unpublished Letter.

given either by taking shares or sending pupils. The Conference gave its cordial approval to the project, and strongly recommended the ministers to exert their influence on its behalf. The original intention was to open this institution in Belfast; but subsequently, by a unanimous vote of the proprietary, Dublin was selected, and a new committee was formed, with the Rev. Robert Masaroon as chairman, and Messrs. William Mathews and Graves Holbrook as secretaries. In a circular issued by them it is said, "In establishing a school in Dublin we are resolved to keep the original object steadily in view—viz., to give a thorough literary and classical education, combined with a sound religious and moral training in strict accordance with the principles of Wesleyan Methodism." Suitable premises were secured in Stephen's green, and in due time the institution was opened, with the Rev. Robinson Scott as governor and chaplain. Such was the origin of the Wesleyan Connexional School, which for many years rendered invaluable service to Irish Methodism.

On March 1st a Wesleyan chapel was opened at Thurles, by the Revs. Walter O. Croggon and William Reilly, who preached appropriate sermons, the former from Genesis xxviii. 17, and the latter from John i. 29. About thirty years previously the Methodist preachers visited this town, long a stronghold of Popery, and were invited by Mr. Joshua Lester to his house, which thenceforward became their preaching-place and home, notwithstanding the personal insults and pecuniary losses which their host suffered in consequence. For many years it was on Mr. Lester's heart to build a house for the worship of God, and in carrying out his design he experienced much difficulty; but with unfaltering resolution he calmly persevered, and this neat and attractive edifice was completed at a cost of £350. He lived to hear the simple, soul-saving message often proclaimed here, and had the joy of knowing that not a few were thus won for Christ. His undeviating loyalty to the truth, and uprightness, subdued even his most bitter foes, thus proving that "when a man's ways please the Lord He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Mrs. Lester was a woman of deep and consistent piety, and she and her husband had the unspeakable happiness of seeing their children rising up in the fear of the Lord and in loving attachment to Methodism.

From several of the missions and circuits of the Primitive Wesleyan Society there was cheering intelligence of religious prosperity. Concerning the county of Wicklow Mr. William Lendrum writes, "God has poured out His Spirit on several parts of this mission. At Arklow, Rathdrum, and Coolafancy many have been convinced of sin and converted to God. We had a visit from Dr. Singleton, which was made a peculiar blessing to us. Brother Toomath is very actively and zealously engaged in this blessed revival, and so also are the leaders."* On April 16th Mr. Toomath preached at Rathdrum, and such was the Divine influence which accompanied the word and the meeting for prayer held afterwards that fourteen persons were awakened to a sense of their state, and some of them led to the Saviour. On the following evening a large congregation assembled at Arklow, where special prayer had been offered, and the power of the Lord was present to break down and to build up, so that thirty were enabled to rejoice in the God of their salvation. In the neighbourhood of Hacketstown there was also a similar work of grace, chiefly through the instrumentality of a devoted sister, whose time, influence, and other talents were all fully consecrated to the service of her Lord and Master.†

Mr. Abraham Dawson of the Youghal mission says, "The congregations here are good, and a spirit of devotion seems to rest upon the people, particularly at Whitegate, where the Lord has graciously acknowledged His own word in the conversion of several. We have also a number of Roman Catholics who attend the services, and have obeyed the Divine command in reference to the apostate Church, 'Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins.' Some of these converts, however, are suffering much persecution. One poor fisherman had to give up his share in a boat, as his partners would not suffer him to fish with them, and a blacksmith lost all his Roman Catholic customers."‡ Two months later the missionary states, "The Lord is still carrying on His own work on this mission. Three or four more families have left the Church of Rome, and now regularly attend the worship of God amongst us and the ministry

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 143.
† *Ibid*, p. 225.
‡ *Ibid*, p. 142.

of the word in the Established Church. All who have made a profession of conversion are walking worthy of their high vocation. The persecution of the converts from Popery is not abated, for the priest told his hearers to have no communications with them, except to give them annoyance, and the mandate has been observed to the letter." *

Mr. John Graham was stationed at Kinsale, and his labours were much owned of the Lord. Amongst the coastguards at the Old Head, especially, an important and cheering movement took place; but difficulties arose from unexpected quarters. Mr. Graham refers to these in the following letter to his brother Charles, superintendent of the Cork circuit, who had had a controversy through the press with a ritualistic clergyman: "I am glad you are now out of the controversial arena. I believe you gained an unsullied victory, and fought with upright motives, but peace is always more congenial than war to the growth of Christian graces. My spirit was a little ruffled lately by the conduct of two clergymen, near the Old Head of Kinsale. They influenced the officer of coastguards to shut against me the door of his watch-house, where I used to preach to the coastguards and some other neglected Protestants. In the meantime God opened the door and heart of a respectable man near the place, and when I last visited there I preached in his large, well-furnished, and well-warmed parlour, to a numerous and attentive congregation; and God was with us." Again, at a subsequent date he writes, "Several coastguards and their friends used to come and hear me preach; a great moral reformation was wrought among them, and some were brought to a knowledge of salvation; but their officer, through the influence and misrepresentation of the neighbouring clergy, has become a violent calumniator and persecutor. By means of his indirect threats most of the men and their families are intimidated from attending preaching. I visited them, and received their hearty blessings. Some wept. Others said, 'It is too hard that we should be kept from hearing God's word in a free country.' I called to see the officer, and desired to explain our design; but he would hear no explanation." †

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 225.

† Memoir of the Rev. John Graham, pp. 38, 39.

On the Ballyconnell mission Mr. William Burns found the work making cheering progress. In the town and its vicinity revival meetings were held, which proved a blessing to many. The quarterly lovefeast was greatly acknowledged of the Lord, especially towards the close, when numbers were "pricked in their heart," and about fourteen professed to have received the pardoning mercy of God. From the time of that service the congregations steadily increased, and the word appeared to be received with increasing readiness, so that the meetings did not close until a late hour, and were felt to be special times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.*

Concerning Clones, Mr. Richard Robinson reports, "The work of the Lord on this circuit is still progressing. Our quarterly meetings have just terminated, and were as signally owned of God as any I have yet witnessed, not less than between thirty and forty having professed to have obtained redemption through the blood of Christ. Although I have attended lovefeasts for the last forty years, I never saw one equal to that which we had at Clones. Our large house was literally crammed, while a powerful sense of the Divine presence pervaded the entire assembly, and the experience of those who spoke was the most rational and Scriptural of any I ever heard. Oh, what a work the Lord has been doing in this circuit during the last eighteen months! About six hundred have been added to the Society in a district of country which does not exceed fifteen miles in length and five in breadth. It is, however, so thickly inhabited with Protestants that in every quarter of a mile there may be obtained a large congregation, and there is no let or hindrance to the preaching of the Gospel. Two years ago a number of our leaders and many of our members left this country for America, so that Methodism seemed to have sustained permanent injury; but the Lord has raised up others, including at least fourteen young men, who with the former leaders are labouring zealously and successfully in various parts of the circuit."† Of those thus converted and led to engage in work for Christ, three at least, James and Alexander Elliott of Agharoosky and William Conlin of Skeachorn, subsequently entered the itinerancy.

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 144.
† *Ibid*, p. 233.

Mr. John Johnston of Ardbarren, near Castlederg, went, one winter's morning, about twelve months previous to this, to meet a class at Kirlish, and was overtaken by a snow-storm, which compelled him to seek shelter behind a hedge. Here, for a moment he was inclined to murmur at his lot, but was immediately relieved by the thought that if God would make him the instrument of the salvation of one soul, it would be an ample reward for his exposure and toil. Having a special call to that district, to visit a sick person, he now wended his way thither again; about twenty persons assembled for prayer, and during the delivery of a brief address the Spirit of God was poured out on them, the entire party falling on their knees and crying aloud for mercy. Before the close of the service eight persons professed to have obtained the pardon of their sins, not one of whom had ever attended a Methodist meeting before. In the evening Mr. Johnston conducted another service in the same place; about fifty bowed down as penitents, and two of them obtained peace in believing. This proved the beginning of a gracious awakening, during which about seventy souls were won for Christ.

Mr. John Heatley writes, "The revival in the town and neighbourhood of Lurgan is blessedly going forward. We have two or three penitent meetings every week. On Sunday week, being the quarter-day, our preaching-house was crowded. It was with difficulty the people could be restrained from speaking. Between sixty and seventy bowed at the seats for anxious seekers, many of whom returned home rejoicing in God. Last Sunday the Lord was very present in quickening and saving power. The week-day meetings are only behind our Sabbath services in point of numbers. Brother James Mahaffy is assisting us like a zealous man of God, as, indeed, is each of the leaders. We have lately formed three new classes, and the old ones are greatly increased in numbers and in piety." *

From Lisburn Mr. John Carlisle communicates the cheering information contained in the following extract: "We held our quarterly meeting here on Sunday, March 24th, and such a day has seldom been witnessed in this country. So great was the power of Divine influence that rested upon the people that all present felt it. About forty persons, some of whom were old, grey-

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 234.

headed men, were deeply convinced of sin, and came forward seeking salvation. Our meetings since then have been well attended. Some of our old friends are getting home to their rest. On last Sunday the remains of Thomas Blake of Derryaghy were committed to the grave, in the ninety-ninth year of his age and the seventy-second of his membership of the Methodist Society; and during the whole of this long course he adorned the Gospel, and then died in the triumph of faith." *

On the Tanderagee circuit it appears that immediately after Conference the leaders had been invited to meet for breakfast in Portadown, where special prayer was offered and arrangements made for revival prayer-meetings throughout the circuit on each Friday evening, and thus good was done. The preachers were Messrs. William Pattyson and John G. Wakeham. The latter had during the previous year travelled on the Enniskillen circuit, and the Lord had so crowned his labours with success that some hundreds of souls were converted through his instrumentality. He now appointed a meeting in the house of Mr. Richard Cox, Derryhale, and here, while narrating the blessed work he had witnessed, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," and seventeen persons were converted to God. Mr. Wakeham had a deep impression that this place would be greatly blessed, and that many would there be brought from darkness to light, and he lived to see this gloriously realized. A succession of revival prayer-meetings were held; the people assembled in large numbers, the Spirit was poured out from on high, and the whole country was stirred up. Mr. Cox fitted up a large barn for the services, and it was filled with earnest hearers. The good work extended to Scotchstreet, Maghon, and at Tanderagee five new Sunday-schools were opened and hundreds of souls were won for Christ.†

In the midst of this extensive and blessed revival the chief instrument in commencing and carrying it on, Mr. Wakeham, was struck down with fever; he removed to the house of Mr. Cox, and in ten days exchanged mortality for life. He was indeed "a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord" through the Divine blessing on his labours. For purity of intention, devotion to his Master's service,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 235.
† *Ibid*, pp. 235-36.

and love for souls he had few equals amongst his contemporaries. No wonder his remains were followed to the grave by a large number of young converts, who "made great lamentation over him."

The members of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference assembled in Dublin, on June 26th, with the Vice-President, Mr. Alexander Stewart, in the chair, and Mr. John Wherry as Secretary. William P. Skuse of Cork, William Scott (2nd) of Cavan, and Thomas Abraham were received on trial. The increase reported in the number of members amounted to three hundred and twenty-two, which was considered "indicative of general prosperity and stability," while the financial position of the Society was regarded, upon the whole, as encouraging.

The Wesleyan Conference commenced its sittings in Dublin, on June 25th. The Rev. John Scott, who presided, was accompanied from England by the Revs. Dr. Newtown and John Beecham. About eighty ministers were present. The Rev. James Tobias was appointed to assist in writing the Journal, and thus entered upon a connection with the secretariat of the Conference which continued for twenty-five years. Three deaths were reported—those of brave old William Hamilton, some of whose last words were, "If I could shout that the world might hear, I would tell of the goodness and love of God my Saviour. Not a cloud! Victory over death! Glory, glory to God!" the venerable Thomas Brown of Belfast, full of days and blessings; and John Farrell of Longford, a devoted and promising young man. Six candidates were received on trial. These included George Deery of Newbliss, Francis Morrow of Drumshanbo, William B. Le Bert of Youghal, Thomas M. Macdonald, and William Butler. Eleven preachers on trial were in the Centenary chapel admitted into full connexion. The Rev. John Nelson was elected junior representative to the British Conference. The number of members of Society returned was twenty-eight thousand four hundred and nine, being an increase in the twelve months of four hundred and five, notwithstanding a loss, by emigration alone, of six hundred and twenty-two. If to those thus returned we add fifteen thousand nine hundred and five members of the Primitive Wesleyan Society, and also those identified with the New Connexion and Primitive Methodists, it

would make a total of about fifty thousand, the largest number ever returned in Ireland. The funds also showed every sign of healthy growth, the increase in the Missionary income alone for the year being £712. Nor was the spiritual state of the Societies less cheering than their numerical and financial position. In the Pastoral Address it is said, "Never were conversions more frequent, and never was holiness more deep or more widely diffused among our spiritual children." Dark days, however, were in store for the country, sweeping away two-thirds of the inhabitants, and thus giving the various Churches a shock from which, numerically at least, they have never recovered.

At a meeting held in Paisley on August 11th the Rev. William M'Clure delivered an able speech, in which he bore a valuable testimony to the results of the Temperance movement in Ireland. He said, "The very rapid spread of total abstinence principles and practices, embracing in a very short space of time nearly six millions of souls, has had and still promises to exercise a powerful influence for good; but while they do not possess the word of the Lord we must rejoice with trembling, and do our utmost to cast as much of the precious leaven into the meal as we possibly can, watching diligently every opportunity of doing so. We must not, however, overlook or despise the good effects of this movement, as we see them exhibited, viz.—1. The alteration in the nature and diminution in the amount of crime. 2. The increasing industry and comfort of many of the people, and their growing desire for improvement. 3. The thirst for reading, which is most evidently increasing, so that reading-rooms are both numerous and well attended. 4. And last, not least, the growing desire for the word of life, the existence of which for some time past has been exhibited in the city of Cork, where, with the sanction of the Romish clergy, a cheap edition of the Douay Bible has been printed and widely circulated, and also a copy of the same book in Irish."*

In this city the Revs. William Reilly and James B. Gillman were stationed, and the cause prospered greatly. Some of the clergy of the Established Church, however, opposed the Society, and endeavoured to prevent people from attending the services, but with little success. Thus one Monday morning a curate met

* Memoir of Rev. W. M'Clure, p. 163.

a young man who had been rescued from a career of profligacy, and inquired, "Where were you yesterday?" "I was in Wesley chapel," answered the young convert, "listening to a beautiful sermon on the wise and foolish virgins." "It was a great sin for you to go there," said the clergyman. "Can Satan cast out Satan?" replied the other. "Before I went there I was a wicked, cursing, swearing, drunken, gambling sinner; but since then I have been saved from all these. Can Satan cast out Satan?" There was no replying to this, and so the conversation ended.

A very different spirit was evinced, in another case, by the rector of Upper Shandon. A cousin of his having taken ill, Mr. Reilly was requested by a member of the family to visit her, which he did. When the rector was informed of this he expressed his satisfaction and his earnest desire that the visits might be repeated. She had previously gone to Wesley chapel once, and was heard muttering, "I'll not be a Methodist." Now, however, she became anxious about her soul, but her mind was very dark with regard to spiritual things. Her conversion was as sudden as her awakening, and she was made unspeakably happy in the Saviour's love. "Never," says Mr. Reilly, "did I witness, in all my experience, a more decided or happy change." The insidious disease made rapid progress; but as her bodily health declined her spiritual strength increased, and her soul was on the stretch for the blessing of full salvation. This she obtained, through the Divine blessing on the reading of the fourteenth chapter of John. Very soon after having been thus made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, the Lord took her to himself. "Mother," said the dying saint, evidently referring to her former opposition to Methodism—"Mother, I die a Methodist; I die a Methodist." The person, a Roman Catholic, in whose house she lodged was amazed at the joyous and triumphant spirit in which she met the last enemy.*

On Sunday, November 17th, at Roscommon, a preaching-house was opened for religious worship by Mr. George H. Irwin. This building had been erected for an infant-school, by Mr. John Carson, who on the giving up of the school, finding that the Primitive Wesleyan Society were greatly in need of a chapel in the town, generously presented the house to them at a nominal

* Unpublished Papers of the Rev. W. Reilly.

rent. Through the exertions of Mr. George Stewart and the local friends, it was soon fitted up, and afforded ample accommodation for the congregation, which previously had assembled in the parish school-house. Referring to the opening service, Mr. Irwin writes, "The congregation was large, the respectable portion of the Protestants of both town and country, for several miles around, as well as several Roman Catholics, were present, and listened with great attention. The expenses of fitting up were defrayed by the collection after the sermon." *

Messrs. Alexander Stewart and John Thompson were stationed on the Charlemont circuit, where a cheering and extensive revival took place. It originated in some observations made at a quarterly meeting, which led a few pious persons to unite in special prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. After a short time, two or three conversions took place in one of the classes; a few earnest leaders, thus encouraged, were stirred up to increased zeal and effort, and thus the good work spread. The preachers, assisted by Mr. Toomath, entered heartily into the movement. Dungannon, Moy, Tamnaghmore, and Verners-bridge all shared in the showers of blessing that refreshed the country, until upwards of one hundred souls were won for Christ.†

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* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 461.
† *Ibid*, pp. 469-70.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1845.

Early in 1845 the Protestantism of the United Kingdom was roused into very determined action by a proposal of the Government to make a large financial grant to the College of Maynooth. This institution had been founded for the education of young men for the Roman Catholic priesthood, in order to save them from the necessity, to which they had formerly been subjected, of repairing to the Continent for the training required to enable them to enter upon the duties of their order. For some years an occasional and variable grant had been made, averaging about £8,000 a year, with the hope of enlisting the sympathy of Romanists with Great Britain; but this had failed. Sir Robert Peel now expected to effect the purpose by increasing the favour, and proposed to make it a permanent endowment of about £26,000 per annum. In the active opposition with which this proposal was met the Methodists of Ireland took an earnest and active part; but all was in vain, as the obnoxious measure was passed, and only added to the influence of an institution which has proved a hotbed of error, disloyalty, and treason.

Sir James Graham followed up this measure of conciliation with one of still greater magnitude. He carried through Parliament a grant for the founding of three colleges for the advancement of literary and scientific instruction. Gentlemen of reputable moral character, irrespective of creed, were to be eligible as presidents and professors. The colleges themselves were to give no theological teaching; but ministers representing the various Churches, under the title of deans of residences, were to communicate such religious instruction as they deemed desirable, and to watch over the morals of the students of their respective denominations. These institutions were shortly afterwards erected

in Belfast, Cork, and Galway. To this step the Government was led by the success that had attended the establishment of National Education, and the plan was warmly approved of by most of the Roman Catholic Members in both Houses of Parliament; but after some hesitation, it was vehemently opposed by their hierarchy, and every attempt made to discountenance what were termed "the godless colleges." Notwithstanding, however, this violent and persistent opposition, these institutions have done a noble work in the encouragement they have given to higher education and in the brilliant successes they have achieved.

The work of primary education continued to be carried on with energy and success by the Methodists of Ireland, and was only limited by their financial resources. Sixty-three schools were now in healthy operation, six new school-houses had been recently erected, and arrangements were made for the opening of a model school and training institution in connection with the premises in Hardwicke street, Dublin.* In the Address to the British Conference this year it is said, "Our Sunday and daily schools continue to increase and prosper under the active and careful supervision of the Rev. Walter O. Croggon."

During one of his tours of inspection, Mr. Croggon met and travelled with that famous controversial priest Tom Maguire, and each proved quite at home with the other. The Methodist, in the course of their conversation, quoted two of Wesley's hymns, which so deeply impressed the Romanist that he expressed an earnest desire to have the book in which they were published. The other, of course, promised to supply him with a copy, and did so on the first opportunity. Who can tell what impression for good was made on the mind of the Romanist ecclesiastic by these beautiful sacred lyrics?

But turning our attention to the more immediate work of the itinerants, the Rev. James B. Gillman having taken ill in Cork, his place was supplied by the Rev. Thomas M. Macdonald, who is described as "a very efficient and acceptable assistant, and of a kind and amiable disposition." At the close of the March quarter one of the leaders, Mr. Hornabrook, came to Mr. Reilly, the superintendent, and said that although he had sustained a great loss—a man with whom he did business, and who owed him

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1845, p. 614.

£1,000, having failed, and he did not expect to receive a thousand shillings—yet he would double his ordinary subscriptions to the yearly collection, increasing it from thirty shillings to three pounds, and he would induce all the members of his class to do the same. On a former occasion Mr. Reilly had spent an evening at Mr. Hornabrook's in company with a number of gentlemen of different religious denominations. These included Mr. Richard Neville Parker, a member of the Congregational Church; a discussion took place on the subject of the final perseverance of the saints, and then and there the last plank was taken from under Mr. Parker's feet, so that he was led to become a Methodist, and as such proved an acceptable and useful local preacher.*

William Feckman continued to pursue his earnest evangelistic labours, with manifest tokens of the Divine blessing. He was most unwilling to preach, however, in a town pulpit or in the presence of a minister, and this reluctance led to at least one noteworthy scene. The Rev. William M'Garvey of the Ballinasloe mission, having to conduct a meeting on a Sunday afternoon at some distance from the town, arranged with Mr. Feckman to commence the usual evening service, promising to be back in time to preach. While the earnest evangelist was engaged in the opening prayer, with his eyes, as usual, fast closed, the minister entered the chapel and quietly passed into the pulpit. On concluding, Feckman looked round the house for the preacher, but in vain. There was, therefore, apparently no alternative but to continue the service, and at length to preach; so he said, "My friends, I had no more idea of addressing you this evening than of entering into eternity. Mr. M'Garvey promised that if I would begin the service he would be here in time to preach. Man may disappoint, but the Lord will not fail us. Isaiah xii. 1, 'And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me.' The prophet is here evidently looking forward to the Gospel dispensation, and the text naturally divides itself into two parts—man under a sense of God's anger, and his joy when that anger is turned away." Just at this point the speaker put his hand into his pocket to find his handkerchief,

* Unpublished MSS. of the Rev. W. Reilly.

and not finding it, turned to look on the seat behind him, and there saw Mr. M'Garvey. Without saying another word or waiting to hear one, Mr. Feckman then hurried down the pulpit stairs, and never slackened his speed until seated in the body of the chapel. No doubt such an abrupt *contretemps* was trying enough to the risible faculties of the congregation; nor was the test lessened when, on Mr. M'Garvey rising and expressing his unwillingness to interrupt Mr. Feckman and the service, the latter responded aloud, "I did not know, sir, that you had come in."*

On the Belfast South circuit the labours of the Rev. Robert G. Cather, especially, were much owned of God, leading to a gracious revival, during which a large number of young people were converted. These included sons and daughters of a number of the leading officials of the Society, two of whom having been for some time estranged from each other, when they saw their children rejoicing together in the love of Christ were led to a friendly and Christian reconciliation. So highly were the services of Mr. Cather appreciated that at the close of his labours on the circuit he was presented with a handsome gold watch, but would only accept it on condition that some similar recognition of the work of his superintendent, the Rev. William Stewart, should be given, which he received in the form of valuable books.

Early in the year Mr. William Pattyson of the Primitive Wesleyan Society writes, giving a cheering account of the work on his circuit, which had been favoured with a continuous outpouring of the Holy Spirit for about twelve months. The quarterly meetings at Tanderagee, Derryanvil, and Portadown had been times of remarkable power, and at the subsequent prayer-meetings there were many earnest seekers of salvation. Altogether, during the year upwards of three hundred persons, old and young, parents and children, were brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to serve the living God.†

At Stradbally, where a Wesleyan chapel had been erected five years previously, the Primitive Society erected a preaching-house, which was opened on Sunday evening, April 6th. Mr. Larminie writes, "I expected that brother M'Fann would have preached

* Memoir of William Feckman, pp. 32-34.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1845, p. 150.

on the occasion, but was disappointed, and had to do the best I could myself. While my heart rejoiced to see the building as full as it could hold, I went into the pulpit as nervous as possible; but the Lord soon took away all my fears, and gave me great liberty in addressing the congregation from the last clause of Exodus xx. 24. The collection freed us from debt." *

At Maghera also, in the county of Down, a new Primitive Wesleyan chapel was erected, chiefly through the liberality of a Christian lady. The Earl of Roden and most of the neighbouring gentry also contributed. The opening services were conducted on June 4th by Mr. William Herbert, jun., who preached with great acceptance, in the morning from 1 Chronicles xxix. 5, and in the evening from 2 Peter i. 4. The collections were good, and with the amounts previously subscribed, covered the entire expenditure, so that the building was opened free of debt.†

The preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on June 25th, and on the following morning were joined by the lay representatives, after which Mr. Alexander Stewart was re-elected Vice-President, and Mr. Joseph M'Cormick appointed Secretary. Three young men, including Robert Sewell of Ballyconnell and William Graham of Fintona, were received on trial, and William Beatty of Ballyshannon and James Morrow of Omagh were reported as having died. Although the decrease in the members was four hundred and ninety-one, it was considered that the Connexion had made progress. "The increasing number and improved condition of our preaching-houses," it is said, "and their comparative freedom from debt, the steady progress of our missions and mission schools, the improved circulation of our Magazine, the firm attachment of our friends, manifested by their efforts to help us in our financial concerns, and, best of all, the conversion of souls, through the Divine blessing on our humble labours, call forth our adoring gratitude to the Great Head of the Church." Mr. John Ramsey was elected Book Steward.

The sittings of the Wesleyan Conference commenced in Cork on June 25th. The Rev. Dr. Bunting being unable to be present, owing to ill-health, the Rev. John Scott presided, and he was

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1845, p. 224.

† *Ibid*, p. 311.

accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Newton. An unusually large number of ministers were present. Five deaths were reported; viz., James Carter of Moira, Daniel Pedlow of Passage West, James Bell of Dublin, James M'Kee of Lurgan, and Matthew Tobias of Belfast, four of whom had been on the list of supernumeraries, and had long borne "the burden and heat of the day." By the death of Mr. Carter a vacancy having occurred in Legal Conference, the Rev. John Carey was chosen by a large majority to fill it. William Lough of Cavan was received as having travelled twelve months; and Thomas M'Lorinan of Antrim, Edward Johnston (2nd) of Manorhamilton, Henry M. Beale of Mountmellick, John Hazelton of Armagh, and four others were admitted on trial. There was a decrease in the memberships of four hundred and eight-three, "owing chiefly to the many—seven hundred and twenty—who had been obliged to emigrate from their fatherland to obtain the food that perisheth and the unfettered exercise of Christian liberty." In the Pastoral Address cheering testimony is borne to "the healthful state of the Societies throughout the land;" and it is said, "Despite of many adversaries and of varied and perplexing hindrances, we have been favoured, in the past year, with signal and reviving tokens of the Divine presence and sanction. Of this fact there is evidence in the well-principled and growing liberality of our Churches, and in the successful zeal of many of them in procuring funds for the support and extension of the Gospel throughout the world," the sum obtained for missionary purposes amounting to nearly £6,500, being £500 more than that of the previous year. The Rev. John F. Mathews was elected Junior Representative to the British Conference.

Methodism was introduced into Doagh at an early period. So far back as 1799 permission was given by the Conference for the erection of a chapel—a humble structure, about sixteen feet, square—to obtain the means for building which assistance was sought even at as a great a distance as Lisburn. When the ordinances were first administered by the preachers Methodists came from Larne to Doagh to receive the Lord's Supper. The ministers lodged with a leader named John Craig, and were in the habit of preaching here on Saturday evening and Sunday morning, proceeding to Ballylagan or Ballygowan for an afternoon service,

and then going on to Larne for the evening. Discipline was exercised with undue rigour, for a Mrs. Hunter and three other women were read out of the Society without any intimation of the violation of rule for which they were punished. It subsequently appeared that the offence of Mrs. Hunter was going on a Sunday to Carrickfergus, though it was to visit her dying mother, while the wrong done by another was that of speaking to an ungodly man on the Sabbath! Such severity could not fail to do serious injury.

In 1820 Mr. Craig and his family went to Canada, but previous to his emigration was greatly distressed at leaving the neighbourhood without a home for the preachers, and made it a subject of special prayer that God would raise up some one to take his place. Little did the good man think that the Lord was about to grant his request in opening the house of Mrs. Hunter, one of the very women whom he had unjustly expelled from the Society, and that her sons James and Andrew would render signal service to Methodism, yet so it proved. James Thompson, a leader and local preacher, was placed in charge of a school about a mile from Doagh, and he got the little chapel in the village repaired, and commenced services in it on Sunday evenings. Thus the Hunters were brought again into connection with the Society. After much prayer and effort, James and Andrew succeeded in getting a site for a new house, including that on which the old one stood, for nine hundred and ninety-nine years, at five shillings per annum, and in 1843 commenced to build a new chapel, which was opened in 1845 free of debt. Mr. James Hunter has been spared to labour all round the circuit, as a most acceptable and successful local preacher, for about fifty-four years, and continues thus to do good service for his Master.

The Rev. Robert J. Meyer was appointed to Killashandra, where there were then chapels in the town itself, in Corlisbrattan, Newtowngore, and Ballinamore. In the last-mentioned town the ministers were most hospitably entertained by Francis and James Connolly, sons of devoted Methodist parents, and men who highly prized the Wesleyan services. Corlisbrattan was famous for its large classes and pious and intelligent leaders. Of these the three brothers Doonan claim special notice; they were the sons of Roman Catholic parents, and had been converted during a blessed

revival here some twenty years previously. Patrick, the eldest, was a superior and devoted man, called by the Methodists, on account of his practical interest in the cause, "the Bishop." Bernard * was a man of deep piety, sound judgment, and consistent life. The third brother was also a remarkable man.

On the Bandon circuit, through the Divine blessing on the labours chiefly of the Rev. Anketell M. Henderson, an extensive religious awakening took place, not only in the town, but especially at Mountpleasant, Newcestown, and other country parts of the circuit, where many were converted to God; but few details are now available. Amongst those led to religious decision were at least four young ladies who subsequently were married to Methodist ministers. To these may be added John and James B. Atkins of Dunmanway, grandsons of Mrs. Elizabeth Atkins, one of the earliest Methodists in the town.

The Rev. Joseph W. M'Kay was now appointed to Cork as junior preacher. Here a sad and admonitory circumstance took place with regard to an amiable and pious young lady, a member of his class. She came to him one day and said, "I am come to give up my ticket." "What," he inquired, "is the matter?" "I am engaged to be married," she replied, "to a young man who is unconverted. I know it is wrong, but I must go through with it, and therefore must cease my connection with the Society." Mr. M'Kay solemnly warned her of her folly and danger, but apparently in vain. The prospect deeply affected her, she became ill, a rapid consumption set in, and soon her spirit passed to another and doubtless better world. "Death had quicker steps than love," and thus she was mercifully preserved from what might have proved an unhappy life.†

For some time the preaching-house occupied by the Primitive Wesleyans in this city, in French-church street, had been found so limited in its accommodation that families connected with the Society were obliged to worship with other congregations, and the building itself had become so dilapidated as to endanger the health of those who attended the services. It was therefore resolved that a new chapel, with a set of class-rooms, should be erected, and the residence of the preachers enlarged. The pro-

* Father of the Rev. W. C. Doonan.

† Unpublished MSS. of Rev. William Reilly.

ject was taken up with energy, and at length completed, at a cost of about £2,000, of which £500 was obtained from the Centenary Fund. On Sunday, August 3rd, the opening services were conducted by Mr. Thomas M'Fann, who was listened to with deep interest and much profit by large audiences. On the following Sabbath Mr. John White preached in the morning, and Mr. J. Toomath in the evening, when the house was so full that some were obliged to leave, unable to obtain admission. The collections amounted to nearly £90.*

At Templemore also a neat and attractive Primitive Wesleyan chapel was erected. On November 10th, 1842, Mr. William Lindsay writes, "I have recommenced preaching in Templemore, and have generally fifty persons to hear me. We have here some young men who promise to be useful, and if we had a preaching-house we could do more good." Three months later he says, "In Templemore Mr. Turner's school-room is generally filled when we have preaching. He has shown us great kindness, not only in making the place comfortable, but in taking an active part with our brethren Richardson and Wilson during my absence. The class is doing pretty well." The report of April, 1843, was still more favourable. "The last time I was in Templemore the room in which I preached was crowded to excess. There have been a few members added to the class, which is in a healthy state." In April, 1844, Mr. Thomas A. Jones writes, "The congregation is greatly increased, which causes us to labour under a great disadvantage, for want of better accommodation. The few friends who distribute tracts do it with zeal, and the Lord is blessing their labours." In the following October it appeared that an eligible preaching-house and residence could be obtained at a cost of about £180; these were subsequently secured, and in due time prepared and fitted up for use.

The reports from several of the Primitive Wesleyan missionaries at the close of the year were very encouraging. Mr. Thomas C. Maguire writes, "During the past quarter four additional places have been opened for holding meetings. One of these is in Bray, where a very kind family have made me welcome to their house as often as I please, while another family has given me the use of a room for the services. The first time I preached in this

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1845, pp. 469-71.

humble place I had nearly forty attentive hearers, and the last time nearly double that number. Never did I see greater anxiety manifested by any people to hear the word of life." Mr. William Stokes of the county of Wicklow says, "On this mission several new openings have been obtained, all of which promise well. Newtownbarry has been regularly visited once a month since Conference. A kind friend entertains the missionary, has opened his house for preaching, and invites his friends and neighbours to attend; and the result has been most satisfactory, for a good attendance has been secured, and I trust good has been done. Another opening has been obtained at Clohamon, where there is a large cotton factory, of which nearly all the hands are Protestants. The proprietor has given us the use of a place he fitted up for affording religious instruction, and here also there is a good attendance. Between Arklow and Gorey, a district where there is a number of careless Protestants, another place of preaching has been obtained, is regularly visited, and the Lord has acknowledged His word in the conviction and conversion of sinners." Concerning Youghal Mr. Edward Sullivan reports, "We have reason to thank God that there is considerable improvement in several of the congregations. In Lismore we have a great increase, and also in Tallow, but in the latter we have bad accommodation; in Middleton we have an excellent congregation; and at Whitegate between fifty and sixty Roman Catholics have thrown off the fetters by which they were bound, and are now under the teaching of the agents of the Society; several, of late, have been converted to God, while all appear convinced that reformation without renovation will not do." Mr. R. J. Dawson of the county of Kerry states, "I feel grateful to God that His work on this station is progressing. In Castleisland we have formed an interesting class; some of the members are under deep convictions, and one of them, a few weeks since, was savingly converted. We have also formed in Milltown a Sunday-school, which promises to have a happy effect on the minds of both the children and their parents. Our September quarterly meeting here was signally owned of God, so much so that some of the most intelligent of our members said it was the most profitable they had attended for years."*

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1845, pp. 462-63.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1846.

One of the numerous cheering tokens of the increased spiritual life of the Christian Church, now so apparent, was the spirit of unity manifested by its members, and leading to the formation of the Evangelical Alliance. The first meeting was convened by a circular issued from Glasgow, in response to which two hundred and seventeen ministers and laymen of different Evangelical denominations met in Conference in Liverpool, in October, 1845. Earnest and united prayer was offered for wisdom and direction; and these prayers were answered by a plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, so that all present were of one heart and mind on the several subjects considered. Eight propositions, with regard to Christian doctrine, were accepted as the basis of union. The aim of the Alliance was stated to be—(1) to promote closer intercourse and warmer affection among the people of God; (2) to exhibit before the world the actual oneness of the Church of Christ; and (3), to adopt united measures for the defence and extension of the common Christianity. And arrangements were made for a provisional committee, in four divisions, to meet in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Dublin respectively, while aggregate meetings should be held in Liverpool, Birmingham, and London. Accordingly the first aggregate meeting of this committee was held in Liverpool on January 13th, 1846, and was attended by nearly two hundred members, including some of the most distinguished and devoted ministers in the three kingdoms. Irish Methodism was represented by at least three—the Rev. Thomas Waugh, the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry, and Mr. Thomas M'Fann. Mr. Tackaberry writes concerning the services, "The Liverpool meetings are worth describing. I

never saw—indeed, I never expect to see—anything like them outside the gates of Paradise."*

The first public meeting of the Alliance in Ireland was held on February 24th, in the Primitive Wesleyan chapel, South Great George's street, Dublin, and was attended, amongst many others, by the Revs. John Greer and John Duncan and Messrs. Thomas M'Fann, George Revington, Thomas C. Maguire, and John O. Bonsall. A number of very able and animated speeches, breathing a truly catholic spirit, were delivered, and the cause was fairly started in this country. A second meeting was held in the Rotundo, on April 21st, with the Hon. Justice Crampton in the chair, and proved to be one of the largest and most interesting assemblies that ever met in that building. The Rev. Robert Masaroon and Mr. Dawson D. Heather, with many others, took part in the proceedings. Other meetings were also held through the provinces. In Belfast the ministers friendly to Evangelical union having met in the vestry of Fisherwick place meeting-house, arranged for a public service. Mr. Tackaberry says, "On Wednesday evening we had a meeting of ministers of all the Protestant denominations in town, to form a branch of the Evangelical Alliance. I have seen no meeting from which I augur so much good. Let that spirit be diffused, and the benefit to the Church of God will be incalculable."† Thus branches were formed in most of the important towns throughout the kingdom, and much was done to promote Evangelical union.

About this time a young man of twenty-two, William Crook, jun., who has since then appeared more frequently on the platform than perhaps any other Methodist preacher in Ireland, made his maiden speech. It was during a tea-meeting at Gurteen; the house was densely crowded, and when he rose to speak he trembled so violently that almost every one present feared that the attempt was about to end in complete failure. The Rev. James Hughes, who was present, however, thought differently, and cried out lustily, "Hear, hear!" Some boys in the house raised a hearty cheer, and the youthful orator was soon out of danger, making such a speech that Mr. Hughes questions if he ever heard a better one from him. Meanwhile the face of his father was a

* Life and Labours of Rev. F. Tackaberry, p. 253.
† *Ibid*, p. 252.

perfect study; the big tears rolled down his cheeks, and his features glowed with delight.*

The little Society at Crumlin received a most valuable addition in Mr. James Johnson (a son of Mr. William Johnson † of Antrim), who having served his apprenticeship with his elder brother Alexander, and married Miss Eliza Thompson of Ardmore, settled in the town. Here he not only entered on a successful business career, but also an enlarged sphere of Christian usefulness, in which he proved a loving and devoted husband, an affectionate and faithful father, and a true friend. His house was opened for the preachers, and they were ever cordially welcomed and hospitably entertained. Each Sabbath he travelled to Antrim, a distance of seven miles, with great regularity, in order to attend the services of the Methodist Church, until Glenavy, which was more convenient, became part of the circuit. He was an earnest and profitable local preacher, whose ministrations were always welcomed by the congregations, and for many years he sustained with great efficiency and acceptance the office of circuit steward, attending most faithfully to every detail of his work.‡

Cheering reports are given of revival work in different parts of the kingdom. One of the most extensive of these appears to have been in connection with the labours of the Primitive Wesleyan Society on the Charlemont circuit, where Messrs. John Wherry and William P. Skuse were stationed. At Dungorman, the Sunday morning congregations having shown signs of increased spiritual life, arrangements were made for evening prayer-meetings, conducted by leaders from Dungannon. These services were signally owned of God; "the floor of the house soon became literally covered with the penitents," and many were converted to God. For at least five months there was no abatement of the interest of the people in the services nor of the spirit which led them to bow in penitence at the throne of grace. The good work also extended to Derryadd, where the Lord poured out His Spirit abundantly. The revival here was remarkable for the large number who were enabled to believe when alone with God, and also for the many converted who had been amongst the most

* Memorials of the Rev. W. Crook, sen., p. 123.

† *Vide* ii., p. 269.

‡ *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1884, p. 420.

notorious sinners in the country, including two leading pugilists.*

The preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan Society appointed by their respective district meetings to attend the Conference assembled in the chapel, South Great George's street, Dublin, on June 24th, and after a public meeting for prayer, entered upon the usual inquiry into moral character and religious experience. On the following morning the lay representatives were present, and Mr. Richard Robinson was elected Secretary. Three young men, including William Flaherty of the Queen's County mission and John Johnston, were received on trial. There was a decrease of one thousand and forty-two in the membership, chiefly on a few of the larger circuits, which were considered, notwithstanding their losses, "in a healthy and vigorous state." "Viewing the Connexion as a whole," it is said, "we have cheering evidence of increased stability and progress in piety."

On June 24th, also, the Wesleyan Conference commenced its sessions for the first time in the Centenary chapel, Dublin, with the Rev. Jacob Stanley as President and the Revs. Dr. Newton and John Lomas as Representatives. Four ministers were reported as having died during the year—John S. Wilson and William Kidd of Dublin, Richard Phillips of the Longford circuit, and Thomas Kerr of Lurgan. Messrs. Phillips and Kidd had preached the Gospel in the Connexion for more than forty years, while the venerable Thomas Kerr had been nearly sixty years engaged in the same hallowed work. The Rev. Henry Price was elected a member of the Legal Conference in the place of Mr. Phillips. James Hutchinson of Belfast South was received as having travelled twelve months; and Samuel Ferguson of Cork, Joseph Johnston of Omagh, Richard Maxwell of Dublin, James Keys of Lowtherstown, James C. Bass, Mortlock Long, and Charles L. Grant were admitted on trial. Owing chiefly to emigration, which involved a loss of six hundred and thirty-three members, there was found to be a decrease in the membership of three hundred and eighty. The Rev. Daniel Macafee was elected Junior Representative to the British Conference, and in the Address to it a grateful expression of appreciation is given "of the movement among Christians of different denominations who hold

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1846, pp. 149-52.

the essential truths of the Gospel towards that unity of affection so strongly inculcated by the Great Author of our holy religion."

The Rev. Robert Huston having written to the Rev. Thomas Waugh, urging a revival of the evangelistic work that had been carried on so successfully by Ouseley and Graham, the proposal was adopted, and he himself, with the Rev. Anketell M. Henderson, was appointed as a general missionary to the south of Ireland. The servants of God at once entered on their work, with cheering tokens of the Divine blessing. Commencing in Blackhall place chapel, Dublin, a new class was formed, and at least one soul won for Christ. At Bandon, in the open air, a considerable number of Romanists listened with respectful attention, while the missionaries pointed the need and the way of salvation. At Skibbereen a deep but quiet work took place, and a number, especially of young persons, were led to religious decision. At Cork the missionaries preached four times in the street, to attentive congregations, many of the members of which crowded into the chapel, and came forward to the rails to be prayed for. Not less than forty persons found peace, and twelve or thirteen perfect love, in the course of fourteen days. At Youghal such was the impression made that the lovefeast on the Sabbath was considered the best those present had ever witnessed, while no less than seven persons testified to having received the pardon of their sins during the preceding week. At Waterford many Romanists attended the services, and there was a large number of penitents. At Arklow, after services in the open air, the chapel, erected about twenty-four years previously, was well filled, and the rails crowded with anxious seekers of salvation. At Gorey the crowd yelled at the missionaries, and assailed them with potatoes and rotten eggs, while one man, a Romanist, entreated them to go on. At Clonmel five persons, including one Romanist, joined the Society. At Wexford several found peace with God, and seven gave in their names to be received on trial. At Enniscorthy, in the open air, hundreds listened to the message of mercy with eager attention. At Ballycanew eighteen new members were added to the classes. And at Camolin a new chapel was opened, and on the following Sabbath a lovefeast held. At the latter service two spoke who had been converted through the Divine blessing on the street-preaching, and several

young converts, the children of those who had taken a lively and liberal interest in the new building.

The Bandon circuit sustained serious loss in the removal by death of two of its leading members. One was Mr. John Scott, who having laboured in connection with the Society for nearly sixteen years, and given promise of much usefulness, was suddenly called to the Church above, at the early age of thirty-seven. The other was Captain Poole, a retired military officer, who resided at Kilrush, and had long and faithfully worked for Christ and liberally supported His cause.*

But a still more terrible blow was inflicted on the cause in Cork, by the unfaithfulness of one of the principal officials and most liberal supporters of the Society. Discipline was promptly and faithfully exercised, but wounds had been inflicted the scars at least of which remained for many years. With regard to this painful occurrence James Field observes, "I have not been able to write these several weeks; my mind has been so distressed, and my nerves so singularly shaken, by numerous visits of friends and other persons, from both city and country, respecting the late unfortunate affair. Since Cork first received its name no man ever fell from so great a height of popularity to such a depth. Nor do I think religion ever got such a shock in this city previously. The chaff is swiftly flying from our Society. God grant none of the wheat may go with it!" †

At this period a youth of seventeen who for many years had enjoyed the love and esteem of his brethren became a member of the Society. James Donnelly was born in December, 1828, at Carrickmacross. In early life he was the subject of Divine influence, and had the advantage of parental religious instruction, the benefit of which happily remains until now. Amongst the influences which in early life were most potent for good, and by which more especially his after-course was shaped, the chief place must be assigned to the ministry of the Gospel in connection with Methodism. This was followed up by identification with the Methodist Church, which he formally joined at Cootehill in 1846. In the March of the following year, during the ministry of the Rev. William M'Garvey, the happy experience of personal reconciliation

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1847, p. 310.

† Memoirs of James Field, p. 172.

God took place. His heart was deeply moved while attending a lovefeast, and the next evening, after a quiet conversation with a Christian lady, when walking home, he was enabled to rest his soul in the confidence of faith upon the Lord Jesus, and enter into the joy of direct communion with God. He was put to work for Christ at once, and in the Sunday-school, in tract distribution, and in holding prayer-meetings exercise was found for the faculties of the new life. As might be expected, grace rapidly grew through such earnest use, and in a short time it marked out its exemplary subject for employment as a class-leader. The progress so rapidly made was a presage of the lofty character and distinguished usefulness which, all through, have marked this much-esteemed minister's career.

At Ballynure Mr. Robert Beatty, deeply impressed with the necessity for better accommodation for religious services, drew out himself a plan for a chapel, got the neighbouring farmers to assist him in carting building materials, superintended the erection, and eventually presented the building to the Connexion, free of debt, for which he received the thanks of the Conference. The opening service was conducted by the Rev. Daniel Macafee. There were then about seventy members of the Society connected with the congregation, but the subsequent closing of the cotton mill led many to remove from the neighbourhood.

At Belfast the increase of the number of worshippers in Donegal square chapel required an increase of accommodation, and the state of the premises left much room for improvement, therefore Mr. William M'Connell promised to contribute £1,500 towards the erection of a new house as soon as a similar sum was collected. The Rev. William Stewart succeeded in raising the required amount, having, by an arrangement of the Conference, travelled through the kingdom to procure it, and the project was started. On Sunday evening, May 24th, the Rev. James Hutchinson preached, from Hebrews iii. 8, the last sermon in the old edifice. On July 2nd the foundation-stone of the new building was laid, in the presence of a large assembly, by Mr. M'Connell, and an eloquent address was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Newton, who had been specially requested by the Conference to be present. The architect was Mr. Isaac Farrell of Dublin, and the builder Mr. James Carlisle. The Society, however, was by no means

unanimous in their judgment as to the project. While all admitted the necessity for a new and much better chapel, some leading and influential members, including Mr. Edward Tucker, strongly advocated the securing of another and larger site in Bedford street, and did so in such a way that the May district meeting in Belfast passed a resolution of sympathy with Mr. Stewart in the painful circumstances through which he had passed, and this resolution was cordially approved by the Conference. On August 15th the Rev. Henry Price, who was appointed superintendent of the circuit, writes, "The chapel is progressing rapidly, and we hope it will be completed at the appointed time and ready for the reception of our next Conference. Mr. Darby and I do all we can to promote peace. A very large loss in the Society and congregation is inevitable; but if formal separation can be avoided, our new chapel will afford us an unobjectionable place in which to worship, and through the Divine blessing we may ultimately regain our position."* We may add that during the rebuilding of the chapel the usual services were held in the Music Hall, May street.

* Unpublished Letter to Rev. Thomas Waugh.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1847.

"THE year 1847," it has been truly said, "supplies one of the most melancholy chapters in the history of Ireland." Trade had been good, prosperity had smiled on the people, and although for some preceding seasons the potato crop had partially failed, there was abundance of food; but in the heart of the nation the spirit of disloyalty smouldered, like a pent-up fire, only waiting to burst forth in the lurid flames of rebellion and murder. An extensive organization, arranged and carried out by O'Connell and his partisans, existed, and hundreds of thousands of the farmers and peasantry attended aggregate monster meetings for enforcing the repeal of the Union. Popery had laid her plans, and was watching her opportunity to deluge the country with blood. Her fell spirit was burning in the heart and frowning in the countenance of millions of her deluded votaries, when God Himself interposed in judgment. This Divine visitation was, no doubt, the means of saving the country from the curse of a most fatal civil war. The dire calamity came so unexpectedly and so suddenly that the most reckless were awed and the most indifferent startled into thoughtfulness. The seed had been deposited in the earth, the season was propitious, and the crop itself most luxuriant, when, early in July, 1846, the hand of God was laid upon it. One night the people retired to rest, having looked on smiling fields, promising abundance, and in the morning they beheld those fields blackened and blasted, the seed rotten under the clod, and gaunt famine staring them in the face. The potato blight was almost universal, and thus the food of the great portion of the inhabitants was destroyed. In December upwards of five thousand wretched beings were begging in the streets of Cork, and when utterly exhausted crawled to the

workhouse to die. In rural districts children, looking like old men and women, through the effects of hunger, were to be seen sitting in groups at cabin doors, silent and sad, and not a few of the poor lived for days or weeks on turnips or cabbages. Early in 1847 the accounts from all quarters, particularly from the south and west, were most appalling. In Skibbereen there was constant use for a death-car with movable end, in which the dead were carried to the graveyard, and there dropped into the ground. The Rev. William Reilly, when on a missionary deputation, says, "Returning from Bantry through Drimoleague, for several miles the country seemed deserted; there was not a stir, where business at this season was usually brisk; all was still as death, the cabins were shut up, and hardly a living soul was to be seen. Drimoleague itself presented a melancholy picture, with numbers of wretched creatures standing in the street, leaning on sticks, and perfectly delirious."

As time advanced the prospect became still more dismal. With famine came its usual attendant, fever of the most malignant type. Hundreds and thousands were swept to their graves, and the pestilence raged with the most fearful effect amongst those who, more than all, were least able to guard against it. The workhouses were filled to overflow, and the number of the inmates at length became so great that the overcrowding of the houses became a source of the very evil which they had been erected partially to prevent. The smaller farmers were reduced to ruin, and those beneath them were thrown into absolute destitution. The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry writes from Sligo, "The state of this town and circuit is awful beyond anything which can be imagined unless seen. No written statement can convey the reality; famine, dysentery, fever, death everywhere! Oh, 'tis positively appalling!" And again, "Things are in an awful state. Many are dying, many must die. Oh, the misery I witness! Jehovah's red right arm is bared, is stretched forth; His lightning flashes; but who regards it?"

Government was at length aroused to the necessity for exercising its paternal care for the people, and came forward with commendable readiness to meet the evil. Ten millions sterling was voted by the Legislature for the relief of Ireland. Corn was rapidly bought up and shipped to this country. Depôts of

provisions were established in convenient parts of the distressed districts, and commissaries appointed for their proper distribution among the starving people. Large cargoes of Indian meal were also purchased and consigned for the use of the sufferers. In March there were employed in public works 734,000 persons, representing so many families, or upwards of three millions of individuals.

Nor was there any lack of private enterprise and benevolence. Many thousands of pounds were forwarded as the contributions of personal charity. The Methodists of Great Britain were not behindhand in this respect, and contributed nearly £6,000, which passed through the hands of Irish Methodist ministers, and was distributed by them irrespective of religious profession. Local committees also were formed, consisting of all religious denominations, and by these subscriptions were collected, soup-kitchens opened, and everything possible done to alleviate the prevailing distress. The Rev. James Collier, who was on the Castlebar circuit, says, "The famine and fever prevailed most at Westport and Newport, and the scenes witnessed were most heartrending. The first soup-kitchen was opened at Castlebar, and was attended by the priest, the Church minister, and the Methodist preachers, each taking charge of it in turn." The Rev. William Reilly states that "the crowds of starving people, crawling into town from the surrounding country, rendered this duty almost unbearable. The appearance of the sufferers was appalling, and no description could convey an adequate conception of the sights presented to the eye and the sounds of misery that fell on the ear." The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry writes, "I have given from three to five hours a day in town, and often in the country, to visiting the poor, the sick, and the dying, and I generally visit three Romanist families for one Protestant;" and again, "I have got tracts from our Book Room, which I give and lend as I visit. I pray with most of the Protestants, and I tell the Romanists of Him who made satisfaction for them on Calvary." Mrs. Whittaker and other members of the Society also availed themselves of the opportunity afforded for doing spiritual and temporal good, visiting the sick, the needy, and the dying, and as much as possible ministering to their necessities.

Heartrending as was the task of attempting to relieve this

suffering, and thus to witness such awful spectacles, it was also exceedingly perilous. Every effort to afford relief was attended with danger. The clothes the famine-stricken people wore, the bags in which they received their supplies, and the very air they breathed were charged with pestilence, and many thus fell martyrs to their Christian devotion. The Rev. Fossey Tackaberry of Sligo, the Rev. William Richey of Youghal, Mr. Thomas Bryan of Dunmanway, and Mr. William N. Alley of Galway, all in the prime of life and in the midst of great usefulness, were thus smitten with disease, and after brief illnesses, entered into the joy of their Lord.

While thus famine and pestilence continued their march of death through the land, filling it with lamentation, and mourning, and woe, those who could fled from the country to America or Australia, to seek an asylum from the troubles of their own land, while thousands at home were hurried into eternity. Thus in four or five years Ireland lost two millions, or about one-fourth of its population. Society was shaken to its centre. Every institution of the land suffered, and the wave of desolation swept over the country, burying beneath its dark waters the hopes of millions. As might be expected, the religious institutions of the land suffered severely, and those ministers of the Gospel whose support was derived from the freewill offerings of their people felt, in some instances sorely, the prevailing financial depression, and were yet to feel it more.

Meantime evangelistic work was not neglected. Messrs. Huston and Henderson continued their labours as general missionaries, with manifest tokens of the Divine blessing. On the Limerick circuit, both in the city and country, souls were won for Christ, and at least twenty-six new members enrolled. Subsequently the Rev. Thomas Hickey wrote, "Those who were made happy during your visit continue to walk in the light of God's countenance, and some others have stepped into glorious liberty." At Borrisokane, where two of the members a short time previously had their houses burned over them, and one of the leaders had been murdered, crowds of Romanists, returning from mass, listened to the glad tidings of salvation, at first with surprise, and then with an interest that showed the word had not been spoken in vain. At Cloughjordan the missionaries spent one of the

happiest Sabbaths they had ever enjoyed. At Camolin a blessed and fruitful lovefeast was held. At Ballycanew some obtained a sense of pardon, and two joined the Society. At Clonegall, where a chapel had been erected twelve years previously, the prayer-meeting was one of uncommon power. At Newtownbarry, in the open air, the rabble raised a great uproar, many of them yelled like fiends, and it appeared as if the devil had not only inflamed their passions, but invigorated every member and organ of their bodies, but all in vain. The servants of God were enabled to deliver their message; as elsewhere, many were eager to hear, and a large congregation was attracted to the chapel, where nine persons joined the Society. At Wexford a new class was formed, and twenty new members were received. At Tinahely there was a memorable Sabbath, during which the services were rich in Divine power. At Rathdrum, in the market, crowds listened to the message of mercy with deep interest. At Wicklow, in the open air, numbers thronged to hear the word preached, and in the chapel the rails were filled with anxious seekers, of whom several were converted and four joined the Society. At Arklow a new class was formed. At New Ross, where a chapel had been erected six years previously, the out-door service was attended by all the ministers of the district, as well as by a large number of deeply impressed strangers. At Enniscorthy the missionaries preached from the steps of the market-house; hundreds in front, as well as in the doors and windows around, listened with marked attention; and in the chapel subsequently distinct good was done. At Athy there were at least fifteen conversions, and several backsliders were restored. At Castlecomer several Romanists followed the missionaries into the chapel. At Hacketstown the Lord was signally present, and amongst those led to the Saviour was a young man who stood up and acknowledged what the Lord had done for his soul, and in a most affecting manner exhorted his young companions to seek the happiness he had found. At Tullow two brothers of a Methodist minister had their backslidings healed, and were restored to the joys of God's salvation. At Drogheda there were stirring and hopeful services. At Dundalk, in the market square, there was a most attentive audience, and in the chapel a delightful meeting. At Newry there were blessed services. And at Belfast, in the open air, about six

hundred persons listened with fixed and solemn attention, while many wept.

Nor were the Primitive Wesleyans without special tokens of the Lord's blessing. Mr. George Stewart, on March 19th, writes from Cavan, "To-day we held our quarterly meeting in this town, and it was said by some of the oldest persons present that they never had seen the like before. Such a number of young converts, and such a holy influence as rested on all present, I also never witnessed previously. We have now nearly two hundred converts, and we seem only in the beginning of the work. All the leaders appear to have caught the fire, and to be determined to work for the Lord. The revival began in a small prayer-meeting, and it spread, bringing under its influence whole families and some Roman Catholics. Old classes are increased, and two new ones have been formed." *

On Sunday, June 20th, the new and beautiful chapel in Donegal square, Belfast, having been completed at a cost of £5,500, was opened for Divine worship. The Rev. William Atherton, President of the Conference, preached in the morning, from Malachi iii. 1, the Rev. Henry Cooke, D.D., in the afternoon, from 1 John v. 4, and the President again in the evening. On the following Sabbath the Rev. Dr. Newton preached, morning and evening, and the amount collected at the five services was £240 19*s.* 5*d.*

The annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist ministers was held in Belfast, and commenced on June 24th, with the Rev. William Atherton in the chair. The Rev. Dr. Newton was also present. Three candidates, including Samuel Johnston, were received on trial. In addition to the devoted Fossey Tackaberry, three ministers had been called from the field of labour to the fruition of reward—David Waugh of Banbridge, Richard Price of Killashee, and Andrew Hamilton of Dublin; and all three had been laborious and successful men, had retired through age and infirmity from the active work, and had in old age and death left strong and cheering testimonies to the power of that Gospel which it had been the joy of their hearts to proclaim to others. In reviewing the work of the year much that was painfully affecting was disclosed. Affliction, disease, and death had pre-

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1847, p. 149.

vailed to an extent never before known. As nearly as could be ascertained, the number of members who had died was not less than one thousand; while fifteen hundred and twenty-one had emigrated, including many of the most pious, useful, and enterprising of the people. In numerous localities, where the proportion of Protestants was comparatively small, classes were broken up, congregations scattered, and the places where the ministers had been entertained closed. The several funds of the Connexion suffered, but the deficiency was much less than might have been anticipated. With regard to the general mission it is said, "We rejoice, and doubtless you will rejoice with us, at the undoubted success of the experiment. Our brethren separated to that onerous work have preached in the streets and fields, the fairs and markets, with little interruption and with great encouragement. The result is a settled conviction of the utility of such an agency, as being peculiarly suited to the condition of the country. Nor does it any longer remain a question whether such a system of instruction be practicable. We regret, therefore, that instead of extending this department of our work to other provinces, our want of means obliges us to discontinue it for the present." * A large and influential committee of ministers and laymen was formed, to review the concerns of the Wesleyan Connexional School. This was the fourth annual mixed committee appointed by the Conference, the others being the Missionary, the Building, and the Chapel Fund committees. The Rev. William Lupton was appointed Junior Representative to the British Conference.

On June 30th the preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference assembled in Dublin, and on the following morning were joined by the lay representatives. Mr. Alexander Stewart was elected President, and Mr. George H. Irwin Secretary. Two candidates were received on trial, and three preachers were reported as having died. These latter were Edward Bowes of Maguiresbridge, William Gunne of Dundalk, and the venerable Adam Averell, in the ninety-third year of his age and the seventieth of his ministry. His piety beautified, as with sunset hues, his last days, and the infirmities of extreme age did not mar its blessedness. "The blessed Jesus!" he exclaimed, as he was about to step into the valley of the shadow of death—"one look

* Minutes of the Irish Conference, iii., p. 372.

at Him is worth all the world." "Oh, thank God! I feel my soul happy in God. He is perfecting His work in me, and I can 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' I can tell from experience that the Lord is the Lord God, merciful and gracious." "Holy! holy! holy!" were his last audible words.

The decrease in the membership amounted to two thousand three hundred and twelve, with regard to which it is said, "The great distress which prevailed over the kingdom forced many of our beloved members to emigrate to distant lands; death 'plied his busy sickle,' so that a large number departed this life and have obtained the inheritance that passeth not away; and local causes have operated in reducing our numbers." The funds of the Society also suffered considerably, there being a deficiency in the Mission Fund of £464, together with £186 in other funds connected with the work. This deficit, however, was largely met at the annual breakfast-meeting, when unexpectedly and spontaneously the sum of £410 was subscribed, thus enabling the itinerants to continue their hallowed work. Mr. John Wherry was appointed Book Steward, an office which he sustained with efficiency for eight years.

On the Belfast North circuit a very cheering revival took place, chiefly through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Rev. Anketell M. Henderson. A large number of young men and young women were led to religious decision, many of whom subsequently occupied important positions of usefulness in connection with the Society, not only in Belfast, but also in other parts of Ireland and England. These included Mr. Hugh Anderson, now of Portadown, the Thomas family, Mr. John Hargraves, afterwards Mayor of Carlisle, Mr. M'Cappin, who died early, very happy in Christ, Miss Walker, who married and settled in Manchester, and others, not to refer to a few who "did run well," but only for a time, and then turned aside.

At Portadown the Primitive Wesleyan chapel erected in 1843 having been purchased by the Ulster Railway Company, a new preaching-house and residence were erected in a better position, chiefly through the exertions of Mr. William Lindsay. The opening services of the chapel took place on Sunday, October 3rd, when Mr. John Graham preached in the morning, from

2 Peter i. 4; Mr. George Revington in the afternoon, from Revelation xii. 11; and Mr. James Griffin in the evening, from John i. 29. The congregations were large, including several leading members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, the sermons were good, and the collections amounted to upwards of £20.*

At Tullyroan also, the Primitive Wesleyan congregation having outgrown the place they were wont to assemble in, a chapel was erected, mainly through the influence and efforts of Mr. Johnston Lightbody. Having presented to the Society a suitable site, he took a principal part in collecting the necessary funds, superintended the work of erection, and on its completion rejoiced greatly in "having found a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." The opening services were conducted on October 17th, when Mr. James Griffin preached in the morning from Matthew xxviii. 20, and in the evening from Acts ii. 1—4. A blessed influence from on high rested on the congregations, which were deeply attentive and unexpectedly large. At these services, and a tea-meeting on the following evening, about £21 was raised.†

Towards the close of the year one of the oldest members of the Society, Mrs. Frizzell of Dungorman, was removed by death. The friends who knew this venerable servant of God best, and especially the members of the class that long met in her room, regarded her with a veneration almost superhuman. One who lived as her companion for twenty-three years said that "every week of that time Mrs. Frizzell appeared to be getting more like the Lord Jesus." Such, indeed, were her well-known benevolence and consistency of character that she was highly esteemed and dearly loved, as a devoted sister in the Lord, by members of other Christian communions than the Methodist Society. Even Roman Catholics acknowledged "if there could be a saint among Protestants, Molly Frizzell must be one." She warned the sinful and careless faithfully, and yet withal so lovingly as to win their respect. Her very face was a doxology, and seemed to shine with a celestial radiance that in itself told unmistakably of the peace and joy which she realized. A few hours in her society often drew from strangers the acknowledgment that she was the most

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1847, pp. 460-62.
† *Ibid*, pp. 462-64.

happy Christian they had ever met. Two days before she died she related her Christian experience, and concluded by saying, with her raised hands clasped together, "Weak in body, but completely happy in God." On the 27th of November, while one of the leaders was engaged in prayer, her happy spirit passed away to its glorious and everlasting home. Thus died, after a life of ninety-six years, "the Mother of Methodism in Killyman," the last in all that neighbourhood of the noble band of early Methodists.

CHAPTER XXIX

1848.

Mr. Dawson D. Heather, as Travelling Secretary, having visited a number of the circuits and missions of the Primitive Wesleyan Society in Ulster, gives a cheering report of his tour. Of Downpatrick he says, "For some time past the work of conversion has been going forward on this circuit. The deputation felt much comforted and encouraged by frequent intercourse with many persons who had recently been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. The ardent love for souls, the burning zeal, and the simple but successful efforts of the converts to bring all within the circle of their influence to Christ showed how much good might be done were all the Lord's people so to feel and act." On the Glenavy mission a considerable number of souls, within a few months, had sought and found pardoning mercy in Christ. On the Augnacloy mission the congregations had greatly improved, some souls had found the way to the feet of Jesus, and means were used for the promotion of a revival of the Lord's work. On the Charlemont circuit "much Divine influence rested on both speakers and hearers, the congregations were greatly increased, and many felt the Gospel to be the power of God unto their salvation." At a protracted meeting in Armagh a great number of persons were so deeply convinced of sin as to cry earnestly to God for redemption through the blood of the Lamb, and about thirty testified to having obtained the pardoning mercy of God. Mr. Heather says, in conclusion, that he had not for years witnessed a more general anxiety and preparedness for a great work of God in the conversion of sinners than he discovered on many of the stations and circuits he had just visited.*

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1848, pp. 59—62.

Not less cheering were the reports furnished by several of the missionaries. Mr. Edward Sullivan of Clonmel says, "The Lord has opened up my way into Carrick-on-Suir, one of the most Roman Catholic towns in Tipperary. I preached twice in a room in the old castle, for the use of which a few persons paid five shillings and sixpence each time; but the priest interfered, and prevented my getting it again. I then took another room, but of this also I was deprived by the same person. Now I preach in a private room, which I have hired, and about thirty persons attend each service." From Kells Mr. James Robinson, jun., writes, "I have, during the past quarter, had two openings for preaching, in a district between Navan and Rathmolyon, where there had been no Methodism and the people were far from any Protestant place of worship. Our new class in Navan is doing well, and the friends there are delighted when the time of my visit arrives. Congregations are on the increase, some souls have been convinced, and throughout the whole winter Roman Catholics have attended the preaching of the Gospel, and appeared particularly attentive." Mr. John M'Ilroy, who was appointed to Augnacloy, states, "The Lord has been pleased to acknowledge the preaching of His word, and the December quarterly meetings also were times of spiritual refreshing. One class that had fallen away has been raised up again and is doing well, and other classes have had an accession of members. The country congregations have greatly increased, and places where preaching had been discontinued have been re-opened, and appear to prosper. Concerning Antrim Mr. Robert Kerr reports having obtained an opening in the village of Milltown, where the attendance was good.*

From the county of Cork, however, a report was furnished by Mr. Thomas C. Maguire, and it supplied some details of a very different kind. It appears that on Sunday, March 26th, one of the Irish teachers at Newmarket, having engaged in a religious discussion with a Roman Catholic, took a Bible from his pocket, to prove the truth of his statements; but the sight of the Word of God so provoked the bigoted Romanist that he violently wrested the volume from the hand of the teacher, ran out into the street, and set the book on fire. Two women, whose hearts

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1848, pp. 148-52.

were grieved at this wicked act, entreated him to desist, saying that he was burning that which told him of the sufferings and death of the Saviour, and their importunity prevailed for a while. In a few minutes afterwards, however, being encouraged by others to go on, he took the Bible into the house of another Romanist, and there, amidst great rejoicing, committed it to the flames. This proved but the beginning of similar acts on a larger scale. On the following day the zealots of Popery went through the town, collected all the Bibles they could lay hands on, and having smeared them with tar, threw them into a large fire, kindled for the purpose in the open street. Some of the copies of the sacred volume, half burned, were lifted up on sticks and tossed up in the air, while the ungodly multitude shouted with fiendish exultation. During this unholy carnival many of the inhabitants of the town seemed greatly pleased, and illuminated their houses, as if exulting in the news of a great victory. On the next day the Bible-burning was renewed, with, if possible, increased delight. As Mr. Maguire concluded his sermon several cries were heard in the street, saying, "We will give him more light," and thus again the horrible work was recommenced. As the missionary returned from the service he noticed one man holding up a burning Bible on a stick, while others kicked the blessed book in and out of the fire, clapping their hands and shouting, "The Bibles are burnt! the Bibles are burnt!" It was indeed a sad spectacle.*

There were at this time in connection with the Wesleyan Methodist Conference twenty-four missionaries in Ireland, who preached the Gospel to nearly eight thousand hearers, and had between two and three thousand members of Society and fifty-three Sunday-schools under their care. There were also in different parts of the kingdom sixty-three daily schools, with about four thousand scholars. The reports from many of the mission stations were on the whole very cheering. From Lucan and Trim the Rev. John Feely writes, "The congregations are good and the Societies prosperous, but continual emigrations and removals prevent an increase in numbers." The Rev. Edward M. Banks of Kilkenny says, "Not a few have been turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to that of God,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1848, pp. 221-22.

and are now joined with us in Church fellowship; but in common with others, we have suffered by emigration, several of our best people and most liberal supporters having removed to distant lands." At Kinsale there was a general improvement in the congregations and Society; two new places for preaching were opened, and the prospect of usefulness was encouraging. The Rev. Frederick Elliott, who was appointed to Berehaven Mines, states, "There has been a great increase in many of our congregations, numbers have been awakened to a sense of their sinfulness and danger, and some led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for present salvation."

Concerning Ballinasloe the Rev. James Sullivan reports, "The influence of famine has been felt as extensively as in the preceding year. Fever and dysentery have overspread the town and country, and still seem to be on the increase, producing fearful mortality. Emigration, destitution, and disease have taken from us some of our excellent people and greatly thinned some of our congregations; but those who remain joyfully hear the word and value it, having felt it to be the power of God to their salvation. The missionary has had the opportunity of speaking to hundreds of Roman Catholics on the subject of their salvation, and in general they have listened with attention, and often with deep emotion." At Killaloe, where the Rev. Henry Geddes was stationed, it appeared that notwithstanding the serious loss sustained by emigration, the congregations were in general large and attentive. In the public services the power of the Spirit was sometimes remarkably present, which was evident from the "solemn and earnest hearing, visible emotion, and fervent prayer" of the people. From Galway the Rev. James Henry writes, "Notwithstanding the number of emigrations, removals, and deaths that have taken place, the cause sustains a decidedly more promising character than it did. The congregations are good, many have come under the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, and a few have been added to the Society." The Rev. Joseph Johnston of Erris says, "Although fever, famine, and destitution have prevailed on this mission, and some of our best friends have suffered much, we have been enabled to prove the truth of God's word, 'The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him.' In

the different localities where I preach the children have received religious instruction, and have committed to memory large portions of the Scriptures, together with the Wesleyan Catechism and hymns. The greater part of the Protestant inhabitants attend the services, and others come occasionally."

On the Donegal mission the Rev. William Guard found the congregations in general very large; many were led to experience the regenerating grace of God, and not a few in the midst of deep poverty could rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; but owing to the distress which prevailed and the number of emigrants, an increase in the membership could not be returned. The Rev. James Donald, who was appointed to Rathmelton, states, "We have had many seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, particularly at our lovefeasts; the daily and Sunday schools are prospering, and the leaders are much quickened." Concerning Newtownlimavady the Rev. Edward Harpur reports, "This mission is in a state of improvement; the congregations are considerably increased, the people hear the word with deep attention and seriousness, and the Societies are in general growing in piety and steadiness. We have had some new openings, where the word is received with gladness, and both the daily and Sabbath schools are healthy and prosperous." At Ballycastle it appears that three new places were opened, in each of which there was preaching once a month, and in several other new places occasional services were held; two new classes were formed, and a children's Bible-class started, which proved the means of good.

The annual Conference of the Wesleyan ministers was held in Dublin, and commenced its sittings on June 23rd, under the presidency of the Rev. Samuel Jackson. The Rev. Dr. Newton was also present. The Rev. William Stewart having for eight years sustained the office of Secretary with much ability, now, through age and infirmities, retired, and the Rev. John F. Mathews was elected in his place. Thomas W. Baker, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months; and John Dwyer of Dublin, George Chambers of Newtownstewart, William Christie of Barry, Longford, William Crook, jun., Edward Best, James Carey, and Colin M'Kay were admitted on trial. Four ministers were reported as having died.

One of these, Archibald Campbell of Dublin, in advanced age was called to his eternal reward; another, George Deery of Omagh, had not completed his term of probation; and two, William Richey of Youghal and William Starkey of Kinsale, were in the midst of their days and their usefulness William A. Darby resigned, being about to enter the Episcopal Church, and Claudius Byrne and Robert Jessop, as they were about to emigrate to America. The decrease in the number of members amounted to nearly fifteen hundred. "Various causes," it is said, "may be assigned for this. The lingering influence of the previous calamity has robbed us of many of our people. The activity and zeal of other Evangelical parties, who are better able than ourselves to establish schools and call forth additional labourers, may also be noticed as a partial cause. The poverty resulting from the pressure of famine and pestilence has contributed its share towards this result, inasmuch as many, through mistaken notions of independence, are unwilling to be found amongst us while unable to contribute to our funds. But the chief cause has been that society in Ireland is in a state of transition; the agitated state of the country has paralyzed trade and produced additional distress; and multitudes have expatriated themselves through dread of coming evils and a desire to enjoy peace and prosperity." *

A still further view of the state of the country is given in the Address to the British Conference. "At the present crisis," it is said, "in the history of this land of spiritual darkness and consequent degradation, a crisis in which licentiousness would destroy liberty, anarchy displace rule, and abounding iniquity overflow all that is righteous, a crisis in which Popery and Infidelity have openly and professedly combined to repudiate British connection, trample on constituted authority, treat our rulers with insolence and contempt, and aim at overturning the institutions of the empire, it surely becomes us, as faithful followers of our venerable Founder, and guardians of the principles left us by our fathers, unitedly and cordially to declare not only our unabated, but increasing attachment to you, as our fathers and brethren in this ministry, and also to the constitution of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which makes us of one nation, as we are of one heart. With you we acknowledge

* Minutes of the Irish Conference, iii., p. 434.

but one Sovereign, the Queen, whom may God bless! one House of Lords, one House of Commons, one kingdom, and one undivided people. Organized agitations and revolutionary threats have only pressed us more closely together, and awakened our energies afresh in support of union, law, and order. As Christian men and ministers, as followers of the ardent and consistent loyalty of Wesley, and as disinterested lovers of our country, we cling to and rejoice in the Union, because it is essential to the greatness and stability of the empire, the prosperity of commerce, the perpetuity of Protestantism, and the operations of our well-adapted system to the moral wants of Ireland. The natural tendency of principles and theories in opposition to these sentiments would be to give ascendency to the Man of Sin, hand over our country to the unrestrained tyranny of priests, drive Protestants from our soil, and speedily produce a dissolution of our Societies and Connexion." * Holding such sentiments, it is not surprising that in an official reply to an Address presented by the Irish Conference to the Lord Lieutenant we find the following passage: "During the century that has elapsed since the establishment of your community as a distinct body by the Rev. John Wesley all the statesmen who have had a share in the administration of the British empire have uniformly found your body distinguished by the steadiness of its loyalty, and its unvarying maintenance of the principles of constitutional law and social order." †

The preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan Society met in Dublin on June 28th, for the examination of character; and on the following day, having been joined by the lay representatives, the Conference was constituted, and Mr. Alexander Stewart re-elected President, and Mr. George H. Irwin Secretary. One candidate, James Wilson, then on the Wicklow mission, was received on trial. No death had taken place, during the year, in the ranks of the itinerants. The decrease in the number of members reported amounted to nine hundred and forty-one, concerning which it is said, "When we consider the numbers who have emigrated during the past year and the number of deaths which have occurred we feel exceedingly grateful to Almighty

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* Minutes of the Irish Conference, iii., pp. 432-3.

† *Ibid*, p. 454.

God that our Society has been preserved in such a comparative state of prosperity."

During the sessions of the British Conference a special feeling of sympathy was excited on behalf of this country. One morning, after the President had taken the chair and the opening exercises had been conducted, the Revs. Thomas Waugh, John F. Mathews, and John Greer, the Irish representatives, announced that they had just heard that rebellion had broken out in Ireland, and that the places where their families resided were in a state of most violent commotion, and that they in consequence requested permission to leave the Conference and return home. The ordinary business was at once suspended, the brethren were commended to God in earnest prayer, and forthwith left for their own land, deeply impressed by the fraternal sympathy they had received. The report, however, proved to be greatly exaggerated. A spirit of disaffection and rebellion was rife, but it culminated in a miserable fiasco, yet very serious apprehensions were entertained.

Concerning the state of the Society, at this period, in Mullingar an interesting view is given by the Rev. Robert J. Meyer, then stationed on the Longford circuit. The principal supporter of the cause then and up to the present time had been Mr. James Tyrrell, the governor of the gaol, a man of deep piety, great consistency, and tender sympathy. As a visitor of the sick he had been greatly owned of the Lord, so that in the course of a few years he could number at least forty persons whom he had been the means of leading to the Saviour. On Sunday mornings the congregations were small but earnest, and in the evenings the chapel was generally filled to its utmost capacity, being attended by many of the leading inhabitants of the town, who, although not identified with the Society, greatly prized its services, highly esteemed its ministers, and generously responded to its financial appeals. There were two conversions at this time that are specially worthy of note. One of them was that of a young man having some business at the gaol. Mr. Tyrrell seized the opportunity of speaking to him about his soul; he became deeply impressed, and did not rest until he found the Pearl of great price. He was now placed in peculiarly trying circumstances, as his father kept a public-house and did a good business; but the young convert was faithful, and the Divine blessing rested

on his fidelity, so that the unholy traffic was given up, and the building which had been the scene of many a carousal became a place of prayer and praise, while the youth himself proved a most useful and acceptable local preacher.

The other notable conversion was that of an eminent local physician, whose professional career would have been still more successful had he not been allured by the intoxicating cup, and thus at once injured his practice, blasted his domestic happiness, and ruined his health. Having shown much kindness and attention to the Methodist ministers and members of their families who had been sick, Mr. Meyer took advantage of this circumstance to pay the doctor a visit, and urge him earnestly and affectionately to seek the Divine favour. The reception was such as opened the way for a visit from Mr. Tyrrell, who was accompanied by the Rev. William Crook, jun., then in the town, and they found the invalid most anxious about his soul. Mr. Crook encouraged him to look to Jesus, quoting and expounding the words, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life;" and the poor penitent did look, and obtained life. A few days subsequently the doctor said to Mr. Meyer, "I thought I knew something of diseases and their proper remedies, but that young minister has much more skill as a physician of the soul." And on another occasion he said, with reference to the Methodists, "The people whom I once despised sought me out, and led me, a miserable sinner, to the Saviour, and now I hope to be for ever saved." Not long afterwards he peacefully passed away, to be "for ever with the Lord."

Although the Conference had not seen its way to the reappointment of general missionaries, it had given direction that two brethren should be appointed in each district, to visit its circuits and missions and hold special services. This was done at the August meetings, and was attended with beneficial results. Many evangelistic meetings were held in the open air, as well as in places of worship, and they proved seasons "of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." No details, however, are available, except from the Enniskillen district, where the Revs. John Armstrong and Robert Huston were appointed. These devoted brethren entered on their work in the middle of September, and

continued engaged in it for about three months. Services were held in the market-house of Maguiresbridge, in a large loft or store of an hotel at Fivemiletown, in the chapel erected about eleven years previously at Tempo, in a barn at Grogey, in the market at Lisnaskea, in the preaching-house built in 1839 at Brookeborough, in the chapel at Knockmanoul, erected in 1832 by the liberality of the Rev. Gustavus Armstrong, in the preaching-house at Lisbellaw, built six years previously, and in the chapels at Enniskillen, Ballinamallard, Lowtherstown,* Trillick, Rockfield, Togherdoo, Pettigo, Ballyshannon, and Manorhamilton, as well as in the open air in each instance. The congregations in general were remarkably large, Divine power accompanied the word, and many souls were won for Christ. At a lovefeast at Brookeborough the experience narrated by at least one devoted old Christian was noteworthy. She said that on the night during which she had found mercy it was freezing, the snow being thick on the ground, yet such was the agony of her mind that her body was bathed in perspiration; and that she could now praise God, who had kept her for fifty-three years, without bringing a blot on His cause.

On the Killashandra circuit a very blessed work appears to have taken place, during the course of which a large number of young men were converted, some of whom subsequently entered the Wesleyan itinerancy and have done a good work for Christ and His cause. These included John Wilson, Charles Wood, Thomas Cooke, and William C. Doonan at Corlisbrattan, and Wilson J. Storey at Newtowngore.

Encouraging reports of success are furnished also from various missions and circuits in connection with the Primitive Wesleyan Society. From the county of Kerry Mr. William Stokes writes, "In this benighted country there is a spirit of inquiry among the people never equalled before; prejudice is breaking down, and there is not the same dread of the priest as formerly. Twelve years ago I found it far more difficult to shake the belief of the peasantry in their false system than I do now. In some of my preaching-places the congregations are the largest I ever saw in a country town—particularly at Newmarket, where the Bible was publicly burned, and where now Romanists attend

* Now called Irvinestown.

the services and listen with great attention." Mr. William Pattyson of Cookstown says, "Our last quarterly meeting here was considered by our friends the largest they had seen for several years. To me it was a very happy season. A few souls were brought to know the love of God. One pious woman sent her daughter seven miles to be present at the meeting, and the Lord honoured the mother's faith by the conversion of her child." Mr. John M'Ilroy, who was stationed at Aughnacloy, states that he had been enabled in five months to travel five hundred and sixty miles, and to preach the Gospel to upwards of five thousand persons, five hundred of whom were Roman Catholics. Nor had he laboured in vain, as three new and promising preaching-places had been opened, the preaching of the word had been accompanied with convincing power, and the classes had been increased. Concerning Antrim and Glenavy Mr. Robert Kerr reports, "In nearly all the principal preaching-places on this mission I have had a steady increase in our congregations; in one district they have been more than trebled, and our Sunday-school at Glenavy has been nearly doubled."* In Belfast revival services were held during November and part of December. Mr. John Graham remarks, "The congregations during all the services were very large; sometimes thirteen hundred were present, and upwards of one hundred anxious souls were spoken to, many of whom found peace in believing." †

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1848, pp. 456–59.

† Memoir of Rev. John Graham, p. 75.

CHAPTER XXX.

1849.

It will be difficult to understand that portion of Methodist history to which we are approaching without glancing again at some of the preceding events. Methodism was, under God, the creation of John Wesley, who moulded its form and made and administered its laws. He claimed supremacy, and it was at once conceded; but his wisdom, disinterestedness, and ability, combined with the special relation he sustained to the preachers and the Societies, rendered his autocracy not only tolerable, but beneficial. However, neither his qualities nor his relation could be transmitted. This he clearly perceived, and therefore, by the execution of the Deed Poll, and by gently habituating the Societies to the rule of the preachers, he prepared for the transfer of his power to the Conference. Then when by his decease the crisis arrived the Conference, by unanimously resolving that all preachers in full connexion should "enjoy every privilege that the members of the Conference enjoy," knit the preachers into the closest unity. Whilst the itinerants were thus considering the best mode of governing the people, some of the people were pondering the mode in which they would best like to be governed. They had submitted to the mild despotism of Wesley, and to the acts of discipline which his assistants had performed in his name. Now it became a question whether they would exhibit a similar meekness when such acts were done in the name of the Conference. A minority were unwilling to do so, and when resolutions were passed by the ministers that the dissentients disapproved of occasion was taken, from the action of the Conference, to secede from the parent body. Thus several offshoots of Methodism were formed in England.

The question of Church government, that roused so much feeling on the other side of the Channel and led to such serious

results, appears, until the period at which we have arrived, to have excited little interest in Irish Methodism. In the sad division of 1817 it was not the power of the Conference that was disputed, but the expediency of its action. Whether it arose from the influence of the Established Church, in which the people had no power, the conciliatory spirit in which the Methodist preachers used their authority, or from both, the fact is patent that for nearly fifty years in Ireland the rule of the Conference was accepted without murmur or complaint. Now, however the apple of discord was thrown into the midst of the people, but failed to produce any extensive or lasting contention. The English Connexion was convulsed by a violent agitation. For several years a series of anonymous papers had been in circulation, under the name of "Fly Sheets," reflecting in the severest manner on the principles and polity of Methodism, and assailing with great virulence many eminent ministers. These tracts were full of innuendoes, covert charges, suspicions, and whisperings of a most damaging nature, which very few had an opportunity of testing, and which silently and surely exercised a very dangerous influence. During the first week of 1849 was announced the forthcoming publication of a newspaper, called the *Wesleyan Times*, in which it was plainly stated that it represented a minority "who deem it their duty to make an unceasingly bold and determined stand against an administration which they believe is fatal in its influence on the body at large, and which by its acts is making Methodism as it is much less lovely and blessed than as it was." With unbounded professions of liberality and of devotedness to Wesleyan Methodism, this paper seldom omitted an opportunity of reflecting on the government of the Connexion or of patronizing and supporting those who resisted it; even the Fly Sheets received a sort of apologetic support, if, indeed, their allegations were not to some extent justified and maintained. At the same time the first number of a new monthly periodical was published, under the title of the *Wesley Banner, or Revival Record;* and among other objects, it was avowedly intended to defend the small minority of Wesleyan ministers who generally dissented from their brethren in the British Conference, and expose what was considered erroneous in the administration of the Connexion. The certain and obvious tendency of such

publications was to destroy the mutual confidence upon which Methodism is based, and to subvert, or at least greatly impede, the operation of its several institutions.

These papers were circulated in the large centres of Ireland, and proved the means of unsettling the minds of some of the officers of the Society, while a few of the leaders who had personal grievances availed themselves of the columns of the *Wesleyan Times* for ventilating them. Dublin appears to have been the first place affected by this pernicious agitation. The chief seat of disaffection was Blackhall place, where several men of influence had passed away, leaving but few behind them of a kindred spirit, and none of sufficient influence to control the discontented. The first violation of propriety was the writing of an insulting and impertinent letter to the Rev. Dr. Newton, on account of which the author was called to order and censured by the leaders' meeting. Then anonymous attacks were made in the *Wesleyan Times* on honoured ministers, by "A Trustee, Steward, and Leader of Dublin North," and gross falsehoods stated concerning them. There can be only one opinion of such conduct. Shooting and stabbing at public men in the dark are cowardly and treacherous, and he who does these is morally guilty. Men who have faults to find and are afraid to put their names to their complaints ought to be silent altogether. The Rev. William Reilly, the superintendent of the circuit, was placed in circumstances of no ordinary difficulty. It was strongly urged on him that he should take action in the matter; but while morally certain of the guilty party, legal evidence to convict him was not available, and the very court by which he should be tried consisted in part of those who participated in his crime and exulted in the mischief he had wrought.

At this trying period many "trembled for the ark of God," but they also sought in prayer Divine help, and not in vain. One leader in Antrim, Mr. William Johnson, said, "I was very uneasy about this agitation in England, until I went and laid the matter before God; and I got this answer: 'God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.' This has perfectly satisfied me that all will be right."* "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1852, p. 92.

At Enniskillen some remarkable trophies of Divine grace were won for Christ, including two men named Wilson and Kerr, who had been found guilty of murder and sentenced to be hanged. Kerr was a poor, ignorant Protestant, who soon after his trial made a full confession of his guilt, and was thus prepared to receive the truth which gradually dawned on his mind. He was visited by the Revs. Robert Huston and Robert Bell, who were filled with joyous amazement at the marked progress in his religious experience, which he himself described thus: "After my sentence, when I came in I went to prayer; but I could not pray—there were clouds between me and God. After a while I felt myself a-lightening, still I could not believe in my Saviour. Yet it was mending one time after another. One day I was turned totally against Him, another day I was with Him, till I threw myself on my knees and promised to give myself up to Him clean and clever, and then the distress was gone. At the same time I thought of what my Saviour did for me on the cross, and that lightened me. Then I felt His love, so that I thought His love and mine were mixed together." He became more and more composed as his end drew near, until he could say, "This is my last day in this world, and my mind isn't so much as on a little curl"—a phrase to signify that it was unruffled.

The case of Wilson, however, was different. He got hold of the idea that as no human being could absolve him, it was necessary to acknowledge his guilt only to God, and therefore stoutly maintained his innocence. Although much prayer was offered on his behalf, and he was frequently visited and faithfully dealt with by the ministers of the circuit and his own wife, it was not until the evening before his execution that he could be brought to confess his crime. This result was largely owing to the affectionate importunity of Mr. Bell, who, after much reasoning and entreaty, engaged in prayer, during which the wretched man suddenly rose from his knees, desired his wife to be sent for, and on her arrival exclaimed, "Oh, Eliza, dear, I shot John! and now I am damned." Then yielding to despair, he threw himself across his bed, and lay there as if lifeless. Three brethren, with Messrs. Huston and Bell, had arranged to remain up with him that night, the whole of which was spent in prayer and praise. The hymn beginning "There is a fountain" was given out. "Now, Thomas," said Mr.

Bell, "now for a plunge"—language which the unhappy man understood as a call to a vigorous and venturous act of faith; and while the second verse was sung—

> "The dying thief rejoiced to see
> That fountain in his day,
> And there may I, though vile as he,
> Wash all my sins away,"

Wilson started as if he had received an electric shock, believed the transporting truth, and leaping to his feet, shouted, "There may I! there may I! Glory be to God, there may I! Yes, there may I wash all my sins away." In all the rapture of a conscious pardon, the sinner saved by grace made the prison resound with his songs of praise, which he sang again and again, amidst a company of weeping and rejoicing officials and visitors. His warder, who had been a leader and had fallen from grace, prostrated himself in penitence of spirit at the throne of grace until his backslidings were healed; and the keeper of Kerr also fell down, crying to God for mercy, and was enabled to lay hold on Christ for salvation. Well might Mr. Huston say, "That was a night of rare Christian fellowship." Wilson's last audible words ere he was hurried into eternity were, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The Bandon circuit sustained a great loss by the removal of George Harris to America. He was superintendent of the Sunday-school, an excellent leader, and a generous supporter of the cause, as well as a very extensive employer of labour; but owing to holding some shares in a company that failed, he was obliged to emigrate to save himself from financial ruin. By a singular coincidence, the last sermon he heard preached before leaving was by the Rev. Thomas Waugh, on "I am thine; save me," and on returning to Bandon, after the lapse of nearly five years, the first sermon he heard was by the same preacher, and his text was, "Mighty to save."

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Cork, where the preparatory committees commenced their sittings on June 22nd. The first meeting was that of the chairmen of districts, when the state of each circuit, in reference particularly to numbers and finances, was carefully considered. It was found that emigration

had deprived the Society of one thousand one hundred and sixty-five members, making a net decrease in the membership of nine hundred and twenty-one. The financial condition of the Connexion, notwithstanding great pressure sustained, was found to be very little below that of the preceding year. At the Missionary Committees of Review it appeared that there were twenty-four missionaries, and that on their stations there were forty-four chapels and two hundred and six rooms and other places in which religious services were conducted. Connected with these and the circuits there were also sixty daily schools, with three thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven scholars. The model school in Dublin had been the means of training efficiently most of the teachers. The reports from the missionaries on the religious state of their respective spheres of labour were on the whole very encouraging, although in many places the spiritual apathy of the people presented an obstacle to successful labour not easily overcome, and everywhere the mortality that prevailed was most affecting. One of the missionaries, the Rev. James Sullivan, for instance, thus writes: "The past year has been one of, perhaps, unprecedented affliction. Fever and other diseases have been fearfully prevalent and fatal; in April cholera broke out with all the violence of a plague, and in a few weeks not less than three thousand souls, in and about Ballinasloe, passed into the eternal world. Amidst this dreadful mortality, not one of the members of our Society was a victim. Never shall I forget the scenes of suffering, distress, and horror that I was called to witness. The cries and groans both of the living and the dying could scarcely be equalled except by what is seen on the battle-field after the victory has been won and the combatants have separated." *

The members of the Conference met on June 27th, with the Rev. Dr. Newton as President. The Rev. Joseph Fowler was also present. Robert Johnson and two other candidates were received on trial. Two ministers, James Rutledge of New Ross and Archibald Murdock of Dungannon, both aged and venerated men, were reported as having died during the year. The Revs. William Reilly and John Williams were appointed to accompany the Rev. Thomas Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference.

The Conference of the preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1849, p. 955.

Society commenced in Dublin on June 27th, and as usual, on the following day the lay representatives were present. Mr. Alexander Stewart was again elected President, and Mr. Henry Taylor Secretary. On Sunday, July 1st, the members attended Divine service at St. Bridget's church, and received the Lord's Supper. James Irwin, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months, and three candidates were admitted on trial. Two deaths had occurred in the ranks of the itinerants—those of Edward Addy of Glenavy and John Buttle of Newtownbarry, each of whom had rendered long and valuable service to the good cause. The Connexional funds were, upon the whole, better than had been anticipated; but there was a decrease of one thousand and fifty-four in the number of members, owing to causes already referred to. Much discussion took place as to the openings for Christian usefulness in the country, and in order to carry out the views of the Conference, it was resolved, in addition to the regular missionaries, to appoint as a general missionary Mr. Henry Taylor, who should devote himself especially to the work of open-air services in neglected parts of the country.

The Divine blessing accompanied the labours of Mr. Taylor. He visited Clones, Newtownbutler, Cavan, and Cootehill, and in each instance the power of the Lord was present to heal. At Feagh there was an encouraging penitent meeting; at Cavan the Lord poured out His Spirit; and at Crossdoney, in the fair, there was a large and attentive auditory, two-thirds of whom were Roman Catholics. At a school-house of Lord Farnham's two hundred persons were present, and all remained kneeling when penitents only were requested to do so. The missionary preached in the market of Dungannon to an immense crowd, that extended beyond the reach of his voice, and all were quiet and attentive. He also attended quarterly meetings at Fivemiletown, Maguiresbridge, and Lisbellaw, and saw fruit to his labours. At Lisbellaw forty or fifty persons professed to have obtained pardoning mercy.*

It pleased the Lord also to favour some places on the Longford circuit and the Roscommon mission of the Primitive Wesleyans with gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Arthur H. Connell writes, "I found, after some short time at Roscommon,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1849, p. 457.

that the congregations increased and the people manifested much anxiety to hear the Gospel. Seeing that the Lord gave effect to His word, brother Richard Robinson and I thought it best to concentrate our efforts. The first place where we held a series of meetings was Mohill. One Sabbath evening, after preaching, a prayer-meeting was held, during which seventeen persons came forward in deep spiritual distress. The services were continued during the week, and although previously our week-evening congregations numbered only fifteen or twenty, now nearly three hundred attended, and each evening from twenty to thirty came forward seeking redemption through the blood of Christ, while the porch of the chapel was thronged with Roman Catholics, who listened most attentively. On the next market-day I got on a chair in a central part of the town, sang two verses of a hymn, and was soon surrounded by nearly three hundred Romanists and some Protestants. I preached to them the unsearchable riches of Christ; they heard with the most marked attention, and as I withdrew they prayed for blessings to rest on me. At Roscommon also the Lord is exciting a spirit of inquiry among the people. Not long ago the congregations were so small that it was thought better to remove the Sabbath preaching from the town; but now the congregations are so much improved that the services have been restored, and the last time I preached the chapel was nearly full, being the largest congregation seen in it for a number of years. There is a wonderful spirit of inquiry among the Roman Catholics in this part of the country; and although I was denounced by a priest from the altar, and the people warned against going to hear me, in one place where it was expected I should preach the congregation consisted principally of Romanists."*

The Revs. William G. Campbell and Edward Best were appointed to the Lowtherstown circuit, where their labours were greatly owned of God. In August a large field-meeting was held, at Mr. Robert Graham's of Lettermoney, and was followed by a prayer-meeting, during which eight persons professed to have obtained a conscious sense of sins forgiven. The good work thus commenced soon spread. Service after service was held, at almost

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1849, pp 457-58.

every one of which the Lord was present in converting power, more especially at the September lovefeasts. At Lowtherstown one of the converts was a man who had become a socialist in England, returned home, obtained admission to the meeting, and was so powerfully impressed that he cried aloud for mercy. The whole congregation was deeply moved, and earnest prayers for pardon were heard from different parts of the house, until not less than twenty contrite souls obtained peace in believing. During the December quarter the ministers preached in the open air, at fairs and markets, and it was not uncommon to see hundreds kneeling down in penitence of spirit. Thus the blessed work extended still more, including Ballinamallard and Sidaire, and the whole moral and religious aspect of the country was changed. One of the converts, an aged pensioner, in narrating his experience, said, "My father taught me the fear of the Lord, and I remember several of the old preachers who counselled me and gave me Scripture lessons; but I did not attend to them. During my foreign service I had no less than eighteen fevers and ten other diseases incident to foreign climates, and conscience frequently strove to vindicate its insulted rights, but I had no strength to carry out my convictions. Although I would promise, and vow, and pray, yet when the pressure of affliction was removed I was the same man over again. I was in several engagements, and often at the point of death. On one occasion, as I rushed into the breach of a besieged city, an officer hastened forward and said, 'Noble, allow me first,' and that instant his head was cut off. After all this I persevered in my rebellion against God, and thought when I should leave the army I would turn to Him; but alas! it was worse and worse I became until this night, and now I can declare to all that God has found me out, and pardoned all my sins."*

On Sunday, September 2nd, the Society in Belfast sustained a sad loss in the complete destruction by fire of their new and beautiful chapel in Donegal square. An organ which had previously been in the Cathedral of Armagh, and is said to have been a splendid instrument, on that day, for the first and last time, lent its euphonious aid to public worship in connection with Methodism. The Rev. Joseph W. M'Kay was the preacher. One

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, pp. 132-36.

of those present says that at the morning service, while singing the verse—

> "Through fire and water bring
> Into the wealthy place,
> And teach me the new song to sing,
> When perfected in grace"

it seemed to her as if she had never heard before anything that deserved the name of music, the tones of the organ were so rich, so deep, so full, and yet in such perfect harmony with the voices of the singers. In the evening the congregation was unusually large, and providentially had an opportunity of quietly retiring. The sexton having locked all up, as he crossed the square turned round, saw a light through one of the windows, and on reopening the doors found the ceiling in a blaze. The alarm was at once given, engines were brought and every exertion used, but in vain; in a couple of hours the work of destruction was complete. It is believed that the fire originated in the over-heating of a pipe which ran along the ceiling to the bude light in the centre, and that it ignited the adjacent timber. The building cost £5,500, besides about £350 the cost of the organ, and was insured for £4,000, thus leaving a deficiency of nearly £2,000. The work of reconstructing the chapel, however, was at once commenced by Mr. James Carlisle, who did not find it necessary to take down all the outside walls, and it was ready for opening on Sunday, June 9th, 1850. The Rev. George B. Macdonald preached in the morning from Psalm lxxiii. 24-5, and in the evening from Revelation i. 5, 6. On the following Sabbath the Rev. Thomas Jackson, the President of the Conference preached, and on the succeeding Friday evening the Rev. Dr. Newton occupied the pulpit. The collections amounted to £200. While the house was rebuilt, by the kind courtesy of the minister and the members of his session, the congregation met in the Linen Hall street Presbyterian meeting-house.

In contrast to this catholic act, the following incident occurred not far distant: On one occasion Mr. James Hunter of Doagh preached at a place near Parkgate, and at the close of the sermon a Presbyterian minister who was present disputed some of the statements he had made. Mr. Hunter replied, and the minister said he would not debate with a layman. In a few days, however,

the Rev. Mr. Black, a minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, challenged the Methodist local preacher to a public theological controversy, and the challenge was promptly accepted. The discussion took place in the Presbyterian meeting-house, Parkgate, was attended by a vast number of people, and continued for three days. Mr. Hunter dealt Calvinism such a severe blow that the minister of the church in which the meetings were held declined to allow them to be continued there, and the Covenanter refused to go elsewhere, for he was glad thus to let the matter drop. The Rev. A. M. Henderson, who was present, said with great enthusiasm, "Methodism could have no better champion than Mr. Hunter." Many years subsequently Mr. Black, who had been some time settled in America, and returned on a visit to Ireland, met Mr. Hunter in a most friendly manner, and gratefully acknowledged the great kindness he had received from the Methodists, and more especially from Mr. James Riddle, in the land of his adoption.

The cholera now raged in several towns in Ireland, particularly in Sligo, from which a considerable number of the inhabitants fled, and almost all business was for a time suspended. Five hundred persons, not including those in the workhouse, died of the disease. During this fearful visitation the labours of the Methodists, especially those of Mrs. Whittaker, amongst the sick and dying, were intense and unremitting, and they were cheered by the peaceful end of several who were led to trust in Christ alone for salvation, as well as by their own experience of the all-sufficiency of the Redeemer as a Deliverer "from the noisome pestilence."

The Society in Cork sustained a very serious loss in the removal by death of James Field, one of the most devoted, self-sacrificing, and successful leaders that, under God, Methodism has produced. On November 14th he was struck with paralysis, and never rallied. He seemed to recognize no earthly friend; but bending over him, one heard him say, "Glorious hope! blessed hope! Sweet, oh, very sweet! life eternal!" Some of the last words he was heard to utter were—

"'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last;"

but his voice failed, so that he was unable to finish the verse. On

Sunday, December 9th, aged eighty-one years, this beloved and honoured servant of Christ entered into everlasting rest.

Irish Methodists have done a very important work in connection with the introduction of Methodism and the origin of Wesleyan missions in many parts of the world. A notable instance of this is found in China. The 59th Regiment was ordered to Hong Kong, and amongst the soldiers in it was Colour-sergeant Ross, a native of Longford, who when a boy had displayed a remarkable acquaintance with the Scriptures, had subsequently, in his native town, joined the Methodist Society, and then given evidence of having passed from death unto life. He proved a most earnest and devoted Christian worker. Scarcely had the 59th arrived in their quarters when a disease, afterwards designated Hong Kong fever, almost decimated the regiment, carrying off, when at its height, six, eight, and even ten soldiers in a day, while the civilians of the town enjoyed almost entire immunity. The Irish Methodist sergeant gathered around him a band of earnest men, quickened, doubtless, to deeper earnestness of faith and service by the tragic scenes they daily witnessed, and exhorted, comforted, and prayed with them. He also wrote to the Mission House in London, earnestly requesting a missionary to be sent to China, and enclosing a subscription of ten pounds from himself and his devoted little band. George Piercy, at his own expense, responded to this call; but, alas! before he arrived at the scene of his hallowed toil the shaft of death had struck the brave and devoted soldier who had introduced Methodism into China. Sergeant Ross passed away in holy triumph, but his work remained, still exists, and will live, a blessing to thousands yet unborn.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1850.

VERY encouraging reports of successful Christian work in connection with the labours of the Primitive Wesleyan Society were furnished, more especially from the Roscommon and the general mission. On February 12th, 1850, Mr. Arthur H. Connell writes, "It has pleased the Great Head of the Church to give effect to the preaching of the Gospel, in the conviction and conversion of many souls in and about Keenagh, where, alas! spiritual apathy had prevailed to an alarming extent. About three months ago I held a series of services in our preaching-house, after having enlisted the sympathy of a few of God's people in their favour. The first special meeting was held on a Sabbath evening; the house was filled almost to overflowing, and the word had a telling effect on the hearers, all of whom remained for the subsequent meeting for prayer. Between thirty and forty responded to an invitation to those who were anxious about their souls to kneel before the Lord. On the following evening a still larger congregation assembled; the truth was equally effective, about the same number knelt down as penitents, and the cries for mercy were most affecting. Next evening another service was held, and nearly one-half of those present gave evidence of their determination to choose the good part. It was a sight, doubtless, that angels rejoiced over. An opportunity was also afforded those who had been blessed to declare what the Lord had done for their souls, and while they did so the congregation was deeply moved and ascriptions of praise ascended from many hearts. A new class has been formed, the old one revived, an increased number of prayer-meetings established, and some promising young men, lately converted, have been taking part in the devotional exercises. Our late missionary meeting in Longford is believed to have been the best ever held there. It was

distinguished for the great number of persons present, its spiritual tone, and the amount of the collection, which was more than double that of the previous year. Several thank-offerings were presented by those who had recently been brought to God. The last Sabbath evening I preached at Mohill the congregation was much larger than on any former occasion. Numbers have been brought to experience God's sweet, forgiving love, and many of the Lord's professed people have been revived and blessed. In Roscommon the congregations continue steady and a spirit of inquiry prevails amongst the people. At Ballinalee, which is remarkable for the nightly depredations that have occurred in it, and in which I had at first only from six to a dozen hearers, I have now usually from fifty to sixty." *

Mr. Henry Taylor, the general missionary, states, "At the meetings held on the Templemore, Waterford, New Ross, Limerick, and Athlone stations the Lord gave tokens of His mercy. At Athlone we had a very blessed meeting; there were several penitents, and one, at least, obtained mercy. At Keenagh the attendance was large, many of those present were young converts, and there were also a number of earnest seekers, some of whom 'were not a little comforted.' At Mohill the Lord was present in the midst of a crowded congregation, and at a prayer-meeting afterwards there were about twenty anxious inquirers. At Swanlinbar, of about a score of penitents, five professed to have obtained the pardon of sin, and at other means of grace more obtained the same blessing. But the great work of God, on this circuit, has taken place in the neighbourhood of Derrygonnelly and Springfield, where about four hundred persons profess to have been converted during the last three or four months. At Springfield, notwithstanding an inclement season, the preaching-house was filled night after night with anxious seekers of salvation, and the Lord triumphed gloriously in setting the captives free. When it seemed that the country could or would afford no more penitents people flocked from the Glack Mountains, their clothes dripping with the rain, and their children in their arms, seeking the mercy of God. Whole families were thus made happy in the love of Christ. At Cosbystown we had an immense congregation, the Spirit worked mightily, and several found peace. Messrs. Payne

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1850, pp. 143-45.

and Henderson, together with the leaders, are doing their work wisely and well, and they have their reward. At the Enniskillen quarterly meeting we had a blessed time; of about thirty penitents, thirteen were enabled to praise a sin-pardoning God. On the following day, in the market, a great crowd collected while I sang a hymn, and increased as I proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. The power of God rested on the assembly, many retired with us to the preaching-house, and some found the Lord to be gracious. About three hundred persons have been converted on this circuit, chiefly about Ballinamallard, within the last three or four months. At the Lisbellaw quarterly meeting, of about thirty penitents, nearly twenty were enabled to rest on Christ as their Saviour. At Ballyjamesduff the preaching-house was thronged with worshippers; the penitents extended across the house, about the pulpit, and as far as the door, and nearly all of them obtained the peace of God. At Kiffagh school-house the congregation surpassed that at Ballyjamesduff, and the penitents and converts were as numerous. On this circuit nearly all the converts are the children of friends with whom our preachers stop, and thus the Lord is rewarding them and answering the prayers of His servants. God is blessedly acknowledging the labours of brothers Dawson and Campbell on this station. Throughout this tour one hundred and fifty persons have been converted at the meetings I attended, and upwards of one thousand souls, including not a few Romanists, have been brought to a saving acquaintance with the truth through the Divine blessing on the labours of our Society in this kingdom since the Conference."*

The good work of the Wesleyan Society on the Lowtherstown circuit, to which reference has been made, continued to deepen and extend. During the March quarter it assumed a cheering aspect in a general desire, especially among the young converts, for perfect love. A series of social religious meetings contributed very much to this. All were crowned more or less with tokens of the Divine favour, and many were enabled to bear witness to the all-cleansing power of the Saviour's blood. One night, when the adult members of two families named Noble, who resided near each other, were from home at one of these tea-meetings, the children of one of the families having received permission to

* *Ibid*, pp. 212-14.

visit the other, it was said by a little boy, eight years old, that as the big people would have a good meeting at Ballinamallard, they might have another there of their own. The proposal was accepted, and while these little people were engaged in prayer the Spirit of God descended on them, they cried earnestly for mercy, and six of them were made happy in the love of Christ.

The missionary anniversary services, throughout the whole district, were seasons of remarkable spiritual power. The deputation, the Revs. William G. Campbell and John Oliver, closed the services almost invariably with special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and while thus engaged many were led to experience redemption through the blood of Christ. The June quarter, on the circuit where the revival originated, was still more remarkably crowned with blessing from on high. At all the lovefeasts the power of the Lord was eminently present to heal. At that in Lowtherstown it was supposed that no fewer than forty persons were made happy partakers of the pardoning mercy of God. Well might Mr. Campbell write, "This was the most remarkable, the most laborious, and, thank God, the most honourable and happy year of my ministry."*

The Rev. John Rattenbury was one of the missionary deputation appointed to visit the south of Ireland, and his labours were greatly appreciated. At Bandon, on a Sunday evening, he preached from Psalm lxxxvii. 5, 6, and during the sermon referred with much feeling to his own conversion when eighteen years old. A young man, named William H. Quarry, being the age referred to, attracted by the singing, had entered the chapel, and having been for years deeply convinced of sin, but ignorant of the plan of salvation, was enabled to realize that God, for Christ's sake, had saved him. At a prayer-meeting during the following week Mr. Cornwall asked him if he was happy, and he replied, "Yes, I am." "How long?" "Since Sunday night last." "What is your name?" "William Quarry." Then, after a pause, the good man said, "William, if you are faithful you will yet preach the Gospel." These words made an impression on the mind of the youth that could not be effaced, and proved prophetic of his subsequent ministerial career.

The Reform agitation continued to disturb the Societies in a

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, pp. 136-38.

few important places, and otherwise exert a baneful influence on the operations of Methodism. The most serious disturbance was on the Dublin North circuit, where the chief delinquent was tried, found guilty, and deprived of all connection with the Society. He, however, continued to meet his class, the members of which thus sympathized with him and practically withdrew from the Connexion. Discipline had also to be exercised on one or two others who had been long and honourably identified with the cause. At Portadown the *Wesleyan Times* was read by several leading officials with great interest; there was considerable excitement in regard to Methodist polity, and a series of resolutions on the subject were prepared for the March quarterly meeting, but the Rev. Thomas Ballard, the superintendent of the circuit, refused to receive them, as opposed to the constitution of Methodism, and then dissolved the meeting. His successor, the Rev. John F. Mathews, however, succeeded in pouring oil on the troubled waters. In Belfast there were a number of influential men who had disapproved of the erection of the chapels in Frederick street and in Donegal square, and they in general sympathized with the Reformers, but there was no serious withdrawal from the Society.

Meanwhile a declaration was drawn out, and was then signed by the President of the Conference and one thousand two hundred and sixty other Methodist ministers, including almost every Wesleyan preacher in Ireland. In this important document the signers affirm their judgment that the agitation was altogether opposed to the spirit of true religion and the unequivocal dictates of the Word of God; that it was destructive of all Christian discipline; that its object was legally impracticable; and that they themselves firmly adhered to the great principles involved in the Explanatory Declaration of 1835, "namely, that to the Conference belongs the determination of the conditions on which ministerial recognition and fraternity are to be accorded, and that for the proper exercise and discharge of this important function it must possess the right which it has exercised from the very beginning, of personal examination, whenever it shall judge it to be called for by the circumstances of the case."* While thus expressing their firm determination to resist the scheme of lay delegation proposed by the agitators, the subscribers took care to show that

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1850, pp. 196-99.

they were not opposed to lay influence generally in the management of Connexional affairs.

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Dublin, the preparatory committees commencing their sittings on June 21st. At the Missionary Committee of Review deep regret was expressed at the apprehended removal of the Rev. Walter O. Croggon, and he received a unanimous vote of thanks for the great ability and zeal with which he had discharged his important duties as superintendent of the missions and schools in Ireland. The Conference met on June 26th, with the Rev. Thomas Jackson as President, and the Revs. Dr. Newton and Dr. Hannah as Representatives. Robert Collier, who had laboured on the Ballyshannon circuit during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months, and Thomas A. M'Kee of Castleblayney, John, son of the Rev. William Gilcriest, Thomas Pearson of Donegal, Robert Hazleton of Portadown, and John R. Porter were admitted on trial. During the year there were six deaths in the ministerial ranks, four of them—Matthew Lanktree of Belfast, Thomas Lougheed of Portarlington, John C. Irvine of Ballyshannon, and Patrick Ffrench of Dublin—were supernumeraries, and two—James M'Clintock of Killashandra and William Guard of Donegal—were engaged in the active work. Considering the continued condition of the country, so unsettled as to its social state, so pressed down by the sad results of famine and disease, and so drained by emigration—involving a loss of nearly eleven hundred members—it is not surprising that there was a further decrease of one thousand one hundred and fourteen in the returns. The various funds of the Connexion, however, presented but little decrease, and it was considered that a spirit of peace and strong attachment to Methodist organization prevailed almost universally. At the same time in the Pastoral Address earnest exhortations are given to "abstain carefully from all evil surmisings, strife, and contention, and to 'endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'" The Revs. John F. Mathews and William P. Appelbe, LL.D., were elected second and third Representatives to the British Conference, at which the Rev. Samuel Young was appointed superintendent of the Irish missions and schools.

On June 26th the Primitive Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin. Mr. Alexander Stewart was elected President, and Mr.

Thomas M'Fann Secretary. While no candidate was received on trial, no death was reported to have taken place amongst the itinerants during the year. On reviewing the work of the twelve months, it is said, "On some of our stations in the beginning of the year cholera raged with frightful mortality. Days of humiliation and prayer were appointed and observed, and we believe ourselves warranted in concluding that, in answer to prayer, its ravages were stopped, and none of our preachers and few of our members fell victims to its power." The state of the Society in general gave considerable satisfaction, and afforded reason to hope that the chief difficulties in the way of progress were being removed. For five years in succession, owing to emigration and the distressed state of the country, there had been an annual decrease in the number of members, and the funds had not been as prosperous as previously; but now there was an increase in the membership of three hundred and fifty-five, and the funds were well up. This prosperity was the result of extensive religious awakenings.

The Rev. William Reilly was appointed by the Wesleyan Conference to the Carlow circuit, and thus records his impressions: "In this town, forty years ago, I commenced my itinerant career, and laboured amongst an affectionate, intelligent, and respectable people. Some have fallen asleep, but others continue to this day. Good George Faircloth and his excellent wife still live, the friends of Methodism and of Methodist preachers, and their baby daughter, that I so often nursed, is now the wife of our gifted friend Mr. Henry Banks, and a mother in Israel. If in Athy I shall not meet my dear old friends Mr. and Mrs. Duncan, their son Alexander is not an unworthy successor of his honoured parents, while their eldest son, John, is an able and pious minister. Old Mr. Banks resides at Athy, useful and honoured as a father in the Connexion. The Colliery and Castlecomer are doing very well, and Baltinglass, where a chapel was built in 1833, and its neighbourhood are quite alive. Hacketstown is doing pretty well, and Knockatomcoyle still alive, though good Billy Barker has passed to the skies; but his widow and two daughters are pious and attached to us, and his son Thomas is an active and happy Christian. William Foote is also here, and has no small addition to his family in his young and really good wife. Mr. Thomas Richardson, a highly informed and accomplished gentleman,

though not an enrolled member, is an attached friend. I spent some happy days among them, and not without the seal of the Spirit on the word preached. Great grace was upon them all."

Mr. Reilly also narrates a remarkable instance of recovery from insanity that occurred. One day a gentleman, Mr. Warren, from the county of Wexford, in great trouble, called on him and said, "I have just left my dear wife at the Asylum, and wish greatly you would visit her. They tell me you cannot see her for a month, but if after that time you would visit her I shall feel deeply indebted to you." As Mr. Reilly had known the family before, he felt especially interested in the case. Before the month expired he sought an opportunity of seeing the poor patient, and succeeded. She was in the refractory ward, was very restless, and could hardly be kept by the nurse from tearing off her clothes. At first all that the servant of God said seemed to make no impression on her mind. He then read a portion of John xiv., but it also appeared to fail in arresting her attention, so he left in despair. The next time he called all his efforts seemed equally hopeless. At length he thought her attention could be arrested by repeating something she had heard or known before, and therefore said, "I suppose you recollect the little hymn beginning 'When I can read my title clear,' that you learned in the Sunday-school?" and as he went on repeating it her countenance lost its rigidity and her face softened, so that when he came to the last verse the fountain was broken up, her bosom heaved, and the big tears rolled down her cheeks, while she exclaimed "Oh, my husband, my dear husband, that I would go through the world with, was here two days ago, and I would not speak to him!" She then proceeded, with perfect calmness, to say that she remembered everything Mr. Reilly had said to her, repeated the part of the fourteenth chapter of John he had read, and gave every indication of a complete recovery. Two weeks later she returned to her family and friends, and Mr. Reilly never heard of any relapse.*

The Revs. William M'Garvey and Robert Collier were appointed to the Downpatrick circuit, on which Mr. Collier says he was at first much discouraged at not seeing fruit to his labours. At length one Sunday at Portaferry, after an apparently fruitless

* Unpublished papers of Rev. W. Reilly.

day's work, and after spending some time in prayer, he made a full consecration of his all to God, and obtained the assurance that he was fully saved. The Divine blessing rested signally on this act and the earnest labours that followed it, so that a blessed revival commenced on the circuit, more especially in the neighbourhood of Saintfield, some of the fruits of which remain until this day.

A very gracious awakening also took place in the neighbourhood of Corlisbrattan, on the Killashandra circuit, of which the Revs. Nathaniel Hobart and John C. Storey were the ministers. Messrs. Thomas Cooke, William C. Doonan, Charles Wood, John Wilson, and Wilson J. Storey threw themselves heartily into the good work, and took a leading part in its promotion. Often from six to twelve persons were converted at one of the cottage meetings.

Nor were the labours of the Primitive Wesleyan Society without cheering tokens of the Lord's blessing. From the Meath mission Mr. Abraham Dawson writes, "We have had blessed meetings since Conference. On one occasion, after preaching, we held a prayer-meeting, when fifty persons came forward as penitents, and several professed to have obtained peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. In another place there were about forty earnest seekers of salvation, while on other occasions and in other meetings from five to twenty were brought by the power of the Spirit into a similar hopeful state. Two of the new classes formed lately are doing well, increasing in numbers, and growing in grace. About six weeks ago Mr. James Robinson, sen., came to supply the place of Mr. William Scott (2nd), and his labours have been much owned of God."

Mr. Alexander Campbell of Roscommon says, "We rejoice to find that the labours of the brethren who preceded us were acknowledged of the Lord in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and the work is progressing. At Keenagh and Mohill it is our custom to hold revival meetings, after preaching, and in these many persons have found peace with God. We have witnessed the conversion of some with regard to whom we had providential indications of a hopeful character previously, and for whom Christian friends had interceded in prayer. We are cheered exceedingly to find the work of conversion begun in

sequestered parts of our field of labour, and to see the prospect of further manifestations of mercy. Since the Conference three new classes have been formed, and another is being resumed. Many of the members have obtained the Divine favour, and others are under hopeful influences. Our old classes also have received additional members, some of whom give promise of much usefulness. On no previous occasion have we seen such a disposition in the Romanists to attend the preaching of the word as since we came to this country, particularly in the county of Leitrim. In one or two instances the Gospel has proved to be to them 'good tidings of great joy.' The priests, and some of the people, are stirred up to declare their enmity to the truth by resorting to personal intimidation. A few days ago three priests from Mohill proceeded to the neighbourhood of our school at Curraun, and by coercion prevailed in making nearly all the Romish parents who had children at our school remove them forthwith, which they did to the number of seventy. However, there was one girl who had been recently converted, and she refused to withdraw from the school, though threatened with more than priestly authority." *

In the providence of God, the attention of Mr. D. D. Heather was directed to Scotland, as a country in which, if the operations of the Society were known, important financial assistance would be given. Accordingly he went over to Glasgow, presented the claims of Irish Methodist missions, and his appeals were responded to by many. Other parts of the kingdom were also visited, with encouraging success, and cordial invitations to return were given. Thus commenced a series of annual visits which have proved fruitful of exceedingly valuable monetary help, as well as spiritual good.

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* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1850, pp. 450-51.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1851.

On January 13th, 1851, the Rev. Samuel Young writes, "It is a pleasing fact that God is reviving His work in many of the circuits in Ireland."* Details, however, of only one or two religious awakenings are now available. Not less encouraging was the testimony borne by the same devoted minister as to the success of Methodist educational work. "Of the good," he says, "that the schools are effecting, mentally, morally, and spiritually, the half cannot be told. Many of the children have been truly converted to God, and, it is hoped, will become useful members both of civil and religious society." The model school in Dublin, under the able management of Mr. Corrigan, still continued to prosper.†

Mrs. Whittaker of Sligo regarded one of the female schools in the town as her special charge, devoting much time and labour to it, in which she accomplished a vast amount of good. In one of her letters she says, with regard to this work, "We have had much to encounter since you were here, but we fear no evil; greater is He that is for us than those against us. In many instances our children give evidence that they are taught of the Lord. One dear child, now dying of asthma, is a marvel of Scripture knowledge and fervent piety, and many Roman Catholic children are very clear in their views. When asked as to the intercession of saints or angels, they say, 'We have but one Lord, our Saviour, and one Priest, to make atonement or pray for us.'"

Early in the year Mr. Henry Cornwall of Bandon visited William H. Quarry, and said to him, "Oh, William, I am so con-

* Unpublished letter to the Rev. Thomas Waugh.

† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, p. 612.

cerned for the young men in the congregation! I have been considering what we could do for them, and think if you would invite them all to breakfast in Watergate school-house, on next Sunday morning, I will bear the expense." The proposal was at once accepted, about fifty responded to the invitation, and fourteen were that day convinced of sin. This led to a number of Sunday-morning meetings of a similar kind, at which the young men were met by Mr. Henry Cornwall and other leaders, and during which the Spirit of God was poured out in mighty power. The Divine influence was soon felt in the pulpit. The Rev. Henry Price one Sunday astonished the congregation by the fervour and earnestness of his preaching, and before closing his sermon said, "A strange power has come on me this morning that I cannot account for, only I believe some are specially praying for me and the work of God." At the conclusion of the service a lady exclaimed, "What in the world happened to Mr. Price to-day? You would think several times he was about to leap out of the pulpit. I never saw him so earnest before." In connection with these services there were converted a large number of young men, including Edward Harte and William Reilly Starkey, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, and John H. and William H. Harte, who proved most acceptable and useful local preachers.

The Primitive Wesleyan Society well-nigh sustained the serious loss of its Travelling Secretary, Mr. Dawson D. Heather. In the midst of his earnest and devoted labours in Scotland, while travelling by rail, a collision took place, which resulted in the destruction of a great part of the train and the death of many of the passengers; but his life was preserved. A gentleman seated beside him was killed on the spot, and Mr. Heather was thrown under a heap of *débris*, while a carriage hung over him, held up by a very slight support. In this painful and perilous position, with his leg fractured and his body crushed, he lay for about three hours, but his mind was kept in perfect peace. He was heard to say afterwards that he was never happier in his life. When help arrived, and willing hands endeavoured to extricate the sufferers, attention was directed to him; but the groan of a fellow-sufferer was heard, and the servant of God refused to receive assistance until his companion was attended to, saying,

"When you have saved him, then come to me." * In consequence of the injury received, however, he was obliged at the Conference to become a supernumerary for one year.

On June 25th the Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced its sittings in the new school-room, South Great George's street, Dublin. Mr. Alexander Stewart was again elected President, and Mr. Thomas M'Fann re-elected Secretary. On the following Sunday the members, according to old usage, went to St. Patrick's cathedral, received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and heard an admirable sermon, full of brotherly love and Christian feeling, preached by the Dean. Two candidates were received on trial—Thomas Hurst and Robert Johnston; and two deaths were reported, those of the venerable William Browne of Newtownbutler and George H. Irwin of New Ross. Mr. James Griffin was appointed Travelling Secretary for the year. In the Pastoral Address it is said, "On the subject of numbers we have to report a small decrease," sixty-three; "nor is this much to be wondered at, when the late census shows a decrease in the population of Ireland, during the past ten years, of nearly two millions." Yet the general appearance of the kingdom was regarded as cheering, for it is stated, "We congratulate our dear brethren on the symptoms of improvement that are now manifesting themselves in reference to our beloved country. The sad and distressing scenes, arising from famine, pestilence, and death, which we witnessed cannot soon be forgotten; but now a better state of things is apparent. Trade and commerce are reviving, the soil is being cultivated with more confidence and hope, and the prospect in reference to the coming harvest is cheering; so that we may say, in the language of the prophet, 'He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.'"

The Conference of Wesleyan ministers was held in Belfast, under the presidency of the Rev. John Beecham, D.D., who was accompanied from England by the Revs. Dr. Hannah and Dr. Newton. The preparatory committees commenced their sittings on Friday, June 20th, when the chairmen of districts met to review the general condition of the Connexion. It was cheering to find that though the tide of emigration continued to flow with unabated force and the loss in members, from this source alone,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1862, pp. 366-67.

during the year, had been nine hundred and fifty-one, the net decrease—one hundred and ninety-two—was much less than might have been expected, and considerably below that of the previous few years. On June 24th the Missionary Committee met, and the General Superintendent read communications from the missionaries. It was highly gratifying to find that the missions and schools were in general prosperous, and that the labourers employed had been much encouraged by gracious manifestations of the Divine presence and blessing. At this meeting also an animated discussion took place on the best means of rendering the work more efficient; several valuable suggestions were made, and these were embodied in a series of resolutions, relating to pastoral visitation of the schools, mission stations becoming circuits, and the appointment of a general missionary to travel on the mission stations. These resolutions were afterwards submitted to the Conference and received its sanction.

The Conference began on June 25th, with, as usual, an early morning and a noon prayer-meeting. About one hundred ministers were present. It was found that two supernumerary brethren—the Revs. John Campbell of Belfast and James M'Cutcheon of Omagh—and one in the active work, the Rev. James Sullivan of Nenagh, had passed to the Church triumphant. William Quaile of Annadale, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months; and Thomas Moran of Ballina, William Guard Price of Newtownards, and John Woods Ballard were admitted on trial. A resolution was passed by which the list of reserve was placed in the hands of the chairman of the Dublin district, with whom correspondence should take place in the case of vacancies arising in the ranks of the itinerants. The Rev. William G. Campbell was appointed a general missionary to visit and labour on the mission stations. The Revs. John Greer and Thomas Meredith were elected to accompany Mr. Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference; and by these ministers a sum of £200 was presented, in the name of their brethren, to the treasurers of the fund for the relief of those ministers in Great Britain who had been deprived of their ordinary circuit allowances.

Before the Conference terminated, the stewards of the Belfast South circuit presented an address to the President, from which

the following extracts merit permanent record: "In these times of sad misrepresentation and distrust we feel we should not be justified in allowing you, as one of the general secretaries of our great Missionary Society, and as the President of the Conference, quietly toretire from amongst us without expressing our entire confidence in the fidelity, wisdom, gentleness, patience, and firmness displayed by you and your eminent colleagues, most especially by one whose name is above all praise, the Rev. Dr. Bunting. It is our desire, however, principally to express our strong and undying attachment to Wesleyan Methodism, in its glorious system of Divine truth, godly discipline, financial economy, and general government; and we would, by this expression of our settled judgment, strengthen your hands and the hands of your brethren in resisting the demands of unreasonable men, who are seeking to change that form of Christianity which has been transmitted to us by our fathers, and of which you and your brethren in the ministry are the guardians. It is our firm purpose, while the Lord shall spare us, to spend and be spent in this cause till our work is done, and then to leave behind us, as the greatest and richest legacy to the rising generation, Wesleyan Methodism unimpaired, and in as glorious and successful operation as when we first cast our lot in with the body."*

The Methodist New Connexion was favoured with special tokens of the Lord's blessing. For a period of three years a growing desire for a revival of the work of God had been cherished by the ministers, leaders, and principal members, yet nothing remarkable appeared. At length three brethren, at Priesthill, made a covenant with one another to meet together weekly to wrestle with the Lord in prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and accordingly did so for several months in succession. Meanwhile the incense of prayer rose also in the closet, the family, and the ordinary services of the Church, and the desire spread and intensified until an assurance was felt that a great and glorious work was about to take place; and at the Conference one brother declared that God had given him to feel that, during the year, there would be such a revival at Priesthill as never had been known by any of the people. Indeed, many

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, p. 884.

unconverted persons were singled out as subjects of intercessory prayer, and the intercessions were urged at the throne of grace until the suppliants felt and declared their conviction that these sinners would be converted to God; and so it proved eventually. At the July quarterly meeting it was agreed to devote one Sabbath to open-air preaching in connection with each of the principal Societies, and on the following week evenings to hold meetings for special prayer. At these services the overhanging cloud burst in blessings, the parched land became a pool, and the wilderness rejoiced and blossomed as the garden of the Lord. The power increased as the efforts continued. On the Thursday at Broomhedge a number of persons in distress came forward, and some found mercy and testified that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned their sins. "On Friday," says the Rev. S. Nicholson, "the chapel was crowded. We continued in prayer with the penitents until eleven o'clock, and several entered into the liberty of the sons of God. This, however, was only the beginning of the gracious work." During the following week the revival broke out still more gloriously at Priesthill. "On August 3rd, in the evening," says the Rev. J. Shuttleworth, "after preaching, we invited those who were seeking mercy to come forward for special prayer. A few responded, and soon the cry for salvation became loud. Some obtained peace, and many more were in great distress. On my way home I called at a friend's, and there found a number of persons who had been at the meeting and were in deep anxiety about their spiritual state. We went to prayer, and God spoke peace to their souls. At the same time one of the leaders was engaged in prayer with a number who had called at his house in distress." On this memorable day the youthful Thomas Carlisle sought and found the Divine favour, and thus entered on his brief career of eminent usefulness. The revival continued, became intensified in power, and spread through the entire neighbourhood. God seemed to touch the hearts of the people in almost every house. They flocked in hundreds each night to the place of prayer; and such was the intense anxiety to gain admission that often, about the hour for commencing the service, the people were seen running from all directions that they might get inside, or if that was impossible, get near the door or one of the windows. The chapel had not accommodation for more than

about two hundred adults, and yet it was calculated that often there were from six to seven hundred inside and around the building. An open-air service was arranged to be held one Sabbath; but nearly half the congregation appeared to consist of penitents, so that no one could preach; but all the people joined in prayer, and in praying, singing, and exhorting one another they spent the whole afternoon.*

In a few weeks about four hundred professed to find peace. The meetings were continued day and night for a considerable time, so earnest was the desire manifested for salvation by the crowds that thronged to the church and to every open door in the neighbourhood. It was a wonderful visitation. And so greatly was the strength of Mr. Nicholson strained that he was for some time laid aside, and it was feared that he would be unable again to resume the active work; but happily these anticipations were not realized.

The Rev. William G. Campbell, who was appointed to visit the mission stations as a general missionary, spent the first three months in Ulster. Immediately after Conference he entered on his work, commencing in the streets of Ballyclare. Thence he proceeded to Downpatrick, and preached in the grove to about five hundred persons, who drank in the word with avidity. The soul of the missionary rejoiced in spending the first Sabbath of his new labours in proclaiming Christ from the spot where Wesley had often preached, and close beside that in which the remains of St. Patrick are said to rest. Thence Mr. Campbell went to Cavan, Lowtherstown, and on to Donegal, where finding out-door services greatly appreciated, he addressed attentive multitudes in the fairs, fields, and markets. Many wept, scores knelt on the ground, and some smote their breasts. At Loughros Point "a large congregation assembled, every word seemed to be devoured, some cried aloud, and several declared that the Lord had delivered and comforted their souls." At Rathmelton the missionary preached standing on a stone where Dr. Coke had stood sixty years previously, and the congregation was large. Some stones were thrown, but this only brought out a greater number to the chapel in the evening. At New Buildings a crowd had assembled for a race, and to these Mr. Campbell delivered his message. "At first

* Memoir of Rev. Thomas Carlisle, pp. 14—17.

they shouted, gazed, and wondered, and then drew near and listened." In Londonderry the work of the Lord appeared in a state of steadily growing prosperity, to which fresh impulse had been given in spring by the visit of the Rev. John Rattenbury, on the missionary deputation. At Newtownlimavady some interesting conversions took place, the out-door services were numerously attended, and all classes, including some Arians, seemed impressed. At Drumclamph, "a revival had been going on with vigour for fourteen months." At Omagh "the scene was affecting, as windows were thrown open, the rich gazing, the poor weeping, and many kneeling on the ground, while Mr. Moran called on God in prayer." A good work had been going on in Antrim for some time, and a fresh impulse was given to it. The open-air services there in Randalstown and in Ballymena were largely attended and deeply impressive. At Galway some interesting conversions took place, and tokens of prosperity appeared both in town and country. At Lucan and Trim it was cheering to witness the willingness of both old and young to yield to the influence of Divine grace. And on the Kilkenny mission there were many professed conversions, including one young man, a Roman Catholic.

For years services had been conducted in Randalstown, but in a most undesirable place. One day Mr. Alexander Johnson of Antrim having occasion to wait on Lord O'Neill on secular business, his lordship said that a room over an ashpit was no place in which to hold religious meetings. Mr. Johnson replied by asking if he would grant a site, and undertaking if he did so that a house would be built. A suitable plot was thus secured at a nominal rent, and on it an exceedingly neat little chapel erected. This building was opened for Divine worship by the Rev. Samuel Young. "The day was fine, the attendance large, and the preacher assisted from above." The collection amounted to £21 9*s*., leaving a debt of only £25, which was soon cleared off.

For thirty years a heavy debt had remained on the Dublin Abbey street chapel, and it now amounted to £1,200; but Mr. Samuel M'Comas and a few other leading friends having felt it on their hearts that this serious clog to the good work should be removed, met for tea, and promised to subscribe £400 if the entire

debt were paid off. A few days later the Rev. J. W. M'Kay writes to Mr. Waugh, "I understand the friends on the North circuit have obtained promised subscriptions to the amount of nearly £600." Arrangements were made, with the consent of the superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Appelbe, for the pew-holders to meet for tea in the school-room, and thus their sympathy was obtained. At the succeeding anniversary of the chapel, when the Rev. Dr. Newton preached there for the last time, having pleaded for the trust every twelve months, save one, for sixteen years, and when a grant was made from the Chapel Fund. the burden was completely removed. In relation to this occasion Dr. Newton wrote to his daughter, "We had overflowing congregations on the Sabbath, and a capital collection. Poor Pat cannot help being generous." *

The returns from the missionaries and schoolmasters of the Primitive Wesleyans at the close of the year show that the cause gained ground, although in some places the progress was slow. The brethren who laboured on the Longford circuit and the Roscommon mission reported favourably; they were well received by the people, and had succeeded in opening places for preaching in Newtownforbes, Leitrim, and Carrickglass. From the Aughnacloy and Lisburn missions there were pleasing accounts. In the latter place it appeared that the influence of the Gospel supplanted the love for horse-racing, and the institution of Temperance societies bade fair to reclaim many from slavery to strong drink. The Ballyconnell mission was reported as doing well, with leaders and local preachers who gave efficient help in carrying on the work. Good was apparent on the Youghal station, while on the Kerry mission a noble work was done in bringing the Gospel to the homes and hearts of many Romanists. God gave the missionary favour in the eyes of the Roman Catholics, so that when he was denounced from the altars the people not only refused to take up a prejudice against him, but in a friendly way went to him and reported the circumstance. At Turlough the Scripture-reader zealously carried forward the work and distributed tracts extensively. To many Romanists he read the Word of God, and in friendly discussions with them had seen fruit to his labours.†

The Travelling Secretary of the Primitive Wesleyan Society,

* Life of Dr. Newton, p. 340.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, pp. 461-62.

Mr. James Griffin, gives a pleasing and satisfactory report of his tour in November and December, of which the following is a summary: "For nearly five weeks the deputation attended a meeting every evening except Saturday, and with only two exceptions, the chapels were well filled with persons of various denominations, Romanists not excepted, who manifested a special interest in the spread of the Gospel. The province of Connaught appeared to stand first in the interest manifested for Ireland's emancipation, the meetings held there being in general the largest the deputation had the privilege of attending; in some cases two hundred people had to leave for want of accommodation. All the missionaries appeared to be animated by love for souls, to make sacrifices of great personal convenience and comfort for their salvation, and to be honoured by the great Head of the Church in their efforts. The deputation had the privilege of conversing with a great number of young persons, the fruit of missionary enterprise. The spirit of liberality appeared greatly on the increase, so much so that in every meeting except one the collection was larger than that of the preceding year—in many cases it was doubled, and in some nearly trebled." *

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1852, pp. 145-46.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1852.

By the regulations of the army, the right of worship according to his conscience is now granted to every British soldier. It was not always so, for many of the military had often great difficulty in attending Methodist services, and sometimes were punished for doing so. In 1839 a general order was issued by the Commander-in-Chief, acknowledging the right of soldiers to enjoy liberty of worship, but it did not instruct commanding officers to enable them to exercise that right, and therefore the possession of this privilege was for years very much a matter of local arrangement. The earliest instance of the public recognition of this right that we have discovered was early in 1852. The Rev. Robert Huston, then on the Dublin North circuit, applied to H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander of the forces, requesting that the men of the garrison preferring to worship in Methodist chapels might have permission to do so. The application was courteously granted; and commanders of regiments were directed "to afford every reasonable facility for the soldiers of their respective regiments belonging to the Wesleyan persuasion to attend Divine service in their own places of worship, under all circumstances; the men to be marched, if the number did not exceed six, by a corporal; if over six and under twenty, by a sergeant; and if above twenty, by a captain or other officer." The order was immediately acted on at Blackhall place, to which chapel about seventy men were marched on the following Sabbath, at noon.* Since then the religious rights of British soldiers have been more fully and generally recognised, and a better provision made for their exercise.

In a previous part of this work,† an account is given of the

* Life and Labours of Rev. F. Tackaberry, p. 60.

† Vol. ii., pp. 255-56.

founding of the Methodist Female Orphan School in Dublin. For nearly fifty years this charity was maintained in premises in Whitefriar street; but these having become untenantable, the trustees resolved to erect a new and better house. A special appeal was made, an excellent site in Harrington street secured, and the commodious and suitable building still in use completed.* No doubt an exceedingly important work has been done and remains to be done by this valuable institution, which has therefore a strong claim on the practical sympathy of all who desire to promote the welfare of poor female orphans.

In January John Wilson was sent to the Castleblayney circuit, to supply for the Rev. James Donald, who was laid aside. The congregations increased so that the little chapel in Monaghan was unable to afford the necessary accommodation, and subscriptions were raised towards the erection of a new building; but owing to numerous difficulties, it was nearly ten years before a suitable site could be secured and the foundation of the chapel laid.

A very powerful attempt was made to crush Methodism in Markethill. The rector and his curates, taking advantage of the transfer of the dispensary from the old governors to the Poor Law authorities, made a number of serious charges, involving neglect of duty, against Dr. Lynn, the principal Methodist in the village. The Government therefore sent an Inspector with instructions to conduct a sworn investigation. This occupied three days, during which the former governors and the clergymen of neighbouring parishes stood nobly by the doctor, whose arduous and self-denying labours they had witnessed for the previous twenty years. The result was that none of the charges were sustained, the doctor retained his appointment, and his enemies were disappointed. Immediately after the decision was announced, the governors met, presented Dr. Lynn with a beautiful address, congratulating him on the honourable manner in which he had been acquitted, and gave him a set of solid silver salvers, as an expression of their "approval of his laborious and skilful attention to the poor of that neighbourhood." Not long afterwards he was appointed surgeon of the Armagh Militia, then embodied, and subsequently he was promoted to the rank of Surgeon-Major. Thus he was placed

* *The Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 857.

beyond the power of his persecutors, all of whom soon disappeared from the parish, and few, if any, lamented their departure.*

At Banbridge some trouble arose from the unfaithfulness of the Society steward, who appears to have imbibed some of the views and feelings hostile to the Conference so prevalent in England. The superintendent of the circuit, the Rev. John Foster, for the sake of peace, bore with his misconduct until he felt he could do so no longer with a clear conscience, and then brought him before a leaders' meeting, over which the chairman of the district presided, and formally charged him with refusing to allow his accounts to be audited, misappropriation of money, falsehood, and opposing and preventing the administration of the Lord's Supper. Twenty-six leaders were present, and without a dissentient pronounced him guilty. He was therefore excluded from the Society. He then gave expression to his dissatisfaction in the *Wesleyan Times*, but was at once replied to by Mr. Foster, in a pamphlet entitled "Slander Refuted." To this the ex-steward published a rejoinder, designated "Who is the Slanderer? or, The Refuter Refuted." Other unpleasant results followed this contention. On May 3rd the Rev. William Ferguson writes, "A few Reformers, so called, in Banbridge are likely to give us trouble. Several of the trustees of the chapel having either died or removed, so as to occasion vacancies, one of the survivors, who lives in the town and holds the deed, without consulting Mr. Foster, held a trustee meeting, appointed new trustees, two of whom are not members of the Society, and got a fresh deed executed. This instrument was presented for signature to one of the original trustees, who lives in Newry, but he refused to sign it, and protested against the whole proceedings."† Thus evidently this matter ended; but the effects of the strife continued for years, and no doubt greatly retarded the progress of the good work.

The cause at this time in Clonakilty was very low. The ministers of the circuit only visited the neighbourhood on week evenings, the Sunday services were sparsely attended and conducted by local preachers, and the whole amount subscribed to circuit and Connexional funds did not reach to £20 per annum.

* Lynn's Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, pp. 113-14.

† Unpublished letter to Rev. T. Waugh.

But the Society received a most valuable addition in Mr. Thomas Bennett. He had been accepted as a candidate for the itinerancy in 1835, but on account of ill-health, was unable to go forward. Four years later, on his marriage, he settled in Skibbereen, where he proved an earnest and successful Christian labourer. And now an excellent opening having presented itself at Shannon Vale, he seized it, threw himself with characteristic fervour and liberality into the work, and the Lord cheered him with abundant tokens of His prospering blessing. The cause began at once to rise, and has never ceased to grow from that time until the present, when the circuit presents one of the most cheering fields in Ireland for evangelistic work.

The first quarter of this year was occupied by the Rev. Wm. G. Campbell in visiting Nenagh, Kilrush, Kerry, and Berehaven Mines, as well as revisiting Ballymena, Antrim, Galway, and Ballinasloe. The Nenagh mission appeared well prepared for a visitation of Divine influence, which was specially realized, and led to the conversion of several. Other mission stations also were favoured with gracious rain, especially Tarbert, Tralee, Killorglin, and Berehaven Mines. At Newport Mr. Campbell and Mr. Pratt took the street, and met with opposition, but received no injury. At Lowtherstown, in the fair, the missionary preached to about one thousand persons. The most profound attention and respect, as well as much sympathy, were indicated in all parts of the north; but only one open-air service was held in the south, as the brethren thought that the excitement arising from the so-called Reformation movement, and the political state of the country, were such as not to justify the attempt. During the year Mr. Campbell says that he preached on an average ten sermons weekly, besides conducting additional services, and travelled about five thousand miles.*

The reports from the missionaries and schoolmasters of the Primitive Wesleyan Society showed a large amount of useful labour, although in some places the exertions of the agents had aroused a spirit of bitter hostility. In Mohill especially the storm raged with great violence, yet the Lord shielded His servants from the evil designs of their persecutors. The congregations were greatly enlarged, and many Romanists received and

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1852.

read the Word of God. The fell spirit of Ribbonism appeared in some parts of Louth, Armagh, and Monaghan; on the Dundalk mission a reign of terror prevailed, and one gentlman, a most valuable friend to the Society, nearly lost his life, because of his exertions to promote Scriptural education and the spiritual welfare of his tenants. But notwithstanding this persecution, the reformation of the people from Popery continued to go forward. In Sligo, several young men having organized themselves for the purpose of holding prayer-meetings and distributing tracts, the congregations became so large that the preaching-house could not afford the needed accommodation.* And at Belfast, through the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. John Wilson, a large number of young men were led to religious decision. These included William Lutton, Alexander M'Cormack, and John M'Cappin, who subsequently entered the itinerancy, as well as several others who have occupied important and useful positions in the Church of Christ.

The reports from the various Wesleyan mission stations were also encouraging. From Lucan Mr. Burnside writes that the chapel in Trim had been much improved and was in a state of comfortable repair. The Rev. John Hughes says that Kilkenny had regular Sabbath and week-night services, and the congregations were steady; Bonlea had preaching every second Sunday, and was an interesting locality, as it contained such a large proportion of poor but industrious Protestants, who were in general attached to Methodism; Bagenalstown, for want of local help, had no Wesleyan services on the alternate Sabbaths; and at Inistioge, Stonyford, and Johnstown the missionaries preached once each fortnight on week evenings. At one country place some new members were added, and the class greatly quickened as well as enlarged. In another place, where there had been but three members and no regular Society, a promising class was formed, a leader appointed, and two new preaching-places opened. At Berehaven Mines the Rev. James Carey found the congregations in general good, convictions were wrought, and in a few instances conversions effected. The chapel in Kenmare had been repaired, arrangements made for more frequent preaching services there, and hopeful anticipations of prosperity were entertained. The Rev. Frederick Stephens says that upwards of £30 had been

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1852, p. 145.

expended on the chapel at Tralee, the greater part of which had been collected in the town, one new preaching-place had been opened, two new classes formed, and a couple of Sabbath-schools commenced in a remote locality. In Ballinasloe the Rev. Thomas Hickey found that the congregations improved, the Society increased, and several persons sought and found peace with God. The Rev. John Walker, who was appointed to Nenagh and Killaloe, states that he had a prosperous year, having been cheered by accessions to the membership and the conversion of souls to God. A serious loss, however, was sustained by the emigration of more than a hundred Wesleyans from Mountshannon. At Galway it appeared there had been several conversions, two new preaching-places opened, and the number of hearers in some places considerably increased. From Belmullet and Erris the Rev. Thomas W. Baker writes, "Our congregations have been steadily improving; Roman Catholics frequently come to hear, and listen with seriousness." The Rev. Francis Stephens of Donegal says that the Gospel had been preached by him and his colleague in more than fifty places, and all the congregations had been sustained, while in some there was a gratifying increase.

The Rev. Jeremiah Wilson, who was appointed to Newtownlimavady, states that the year was one of spiritual prosperity, the congregations were good, and the word of the Lord was accompanied with the Holy Spirit. The class-meetings had been specially owned of God, some persons were justified, backsliders were restored, and believers strengthened. Concerning Ballymena the Rev. John Feely reports that the mission continued promising, the Society healthy, and the congregations steady. Here and on all the other mission stations the visits of the Rev. W. G. Campbell were not only acceptable, but graciously owned of God.*

The Wesleyan Conference met this year in Dublin, the preparatory committees commencing their sittings on June 18th. The Chapel Fund Committee considered various applications for relief, and, by a careful application of the funds at its disposal, made a provision for the liquidation or final payment of chapel debts to a considerable amount. At the Committee of the Connexional school it was reported that the premises had been enlarged and improved, and that the institution presented a more

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1852.

cheering aspect than at any former period. At the Missionary Committee the reports of the state of the work were considered satisfactory and encouraging; and arrangements were made for the opening of three new missions in Connaught, to meet the desire for religious instruction evinced by many Roman Catholics, and at the same time supply the wants of numerous Protestants who were left without the public and social means of grace they desired.

The Conference began on June 23rd; about one hundred ministers were present, and the chair was occupied by the Rev. Dr. Hannah, who was accompanied by the Revs. Dr. Newton and William Arthur, A.M. During the year two venerable supernumerary ministers, Henry Deery of Dublin and Thomas Ridgeway of Belfast, were called to their eternal reward. Thomas Guard, who had been called out, was received as having travelled twelve months; and Oliver M'Cutcheon of Omagh, Robert Crook, A.B., George Alley, John Wilson, Charles Wood, and James Edwards were admitted on trial. In the Pastoral Address it is said, "Some of our circuits have been favoured with a more than ordinary effusion of the Holy Spirit; but although many souls have been thus added to us and to the Lord, we, as a Connexion, have again to lament a decrease. Causes with which we have been sadly familiar continue to operate, and—not to advert to others—emigration has again diminished the numbers in our Societies. Amongst those of whom we have thus been deprived must be included some of our most active and useful members, many of our most interesting young people, who were the rising hope of our churches, and numerous attendants on our ministry, from whom we reasonably anticipated an accession to our classes." However, the success which attended the indefatigable labours of the Rev. William G. Campbell led to his reappointment as a general missionary; and at the request of the Rev. William Arthur, three additional missions were undertaken. These were at Connemara, Westport, and Killala. The Revs. Henry Price and James Tobias were chosen to accompany Mr. Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference.

On June 30th the Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced its sittings in Dublin. Mr. Alexander Stewart was for the sixth year in succession elected President, and Mr. William H. Mervyn

was appointed Secretary. In the return of members there was reported a small increase of five; while on a careful review of the state of the Connexion, it was stated that a spirit of peace and love prevailed; the doctrine and discipline of the Society had been maintained in their simplicity and integrity, and on some circuits gracious revivals had taken place. For several years a heavy debt on the Missionary Fund had seriously operated against the aggressive work of the Society, but now it was found that the greater portion of this had been removed, chiefly through the exertions of Mr. D. D. Heather. The state of the country in general was also considered very cheering, as many of the people had been aroused "to a consciousness of their duty as citizens of a free state, and of their solemn responsibility to God, the Judge of all," and had "broken loose from the grasp of a mercenary and selfish priesthood."

The Rev. William G. Campbell entered at once on his work, beginning in the province of Ulster. Special services were arranged for and conducted by him in Belfast, Donaghadee, Ballyclare, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Rathmelton, and Strabane, and were graciously owned of God. At Omagh a few were on the stretch for entire sanctification, and obtained it. At Aughnacloy many mourned with godly sorrow. At the fair in Ballybay there was a vast concourse of people, and at Rockcorry and Cootehill "overflowing congregations, with marked tokens of the goings forth of the Lord in His sanctuary." The counties of Donegal, Mayo, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Leitrim were also visited by the missionary, and all afforded evidence of special prosperity. The services were well attended at Kilkenny, and several young persons manifested an earnest desire "to flee from the wrath to come." At Ballinkillin, where a blessed religious revival had taken place, some Romanists were awakened, but feared to take an open and decided stand. Bagenalstown gave indications that were hopeful; and at Athy the arm of the Lord was made bare.*

It having been considered at the Conference that at least one of the missionaries appointed to the new missions in Connaught should be a man of more than average experience and judgment, and those brethren selected being unwilling to undertake the

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1853.

responsibility, the Rev. Gibson M'Millen arose and volunteered his services, which were accordingly accepted. He was appointed to Westport, and there, far from the large and influential audiences to which he had been accustomed, he applied himself earnestly to acquiring a knowledge of the Irish language, ministering to the little congregations committed to his care, arresting the Rome-ward tendencies of many Protestants who had been neglected by their own clergy, and preaching to not a few Romanists, some of whom were turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."*

The Rev. James Henry having been appointed to commence the mission in Connemara, states that he no sooner began his work at Cloonbeg than a congregation was formed, and continued to increase by the addition not only of Protestants, but also of Romanists, who attended the services morning and evening. The school also improved much. Owing to the decease of one of the members, who had witnessed a good confession, the missionary had then to remove to Recess, where a school was at once opened, and attended, amongst others, by the children of hearers who had been Romanists. The congregations here soon increased from four or five persons to about thirty, most of whom had been Roman Catholics. Thus in the midst of a desolate region, with no Protestant place of worship nearer than ten miles, were established regular public services, with a daily and Sunday school.† Another school was speedily opened at Roundstone, which did well notwithstanding the anathemas hurled at it by the Archbishop of Tuam and the repeated altar denunciations of the parish priest. The latter perceiving his want of success, then visited the school, and spoke strongly against the reading of the Bible by the children of his people. A Protestant girl, however, stood up bravely and inquired, "What, sir, can you give us better than the Word of God? Did not Jesus command us to 'search the Scriptures'? and did not Timothy know them from a child?" The priest replied that he did not come there to hold a controversy with her, and left to visit the parents and urge them not to send their children to the school, but all in vain.‡

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* *Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 977.

† *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1853.

‡ *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1852, pp. 1133-34.

The Revs. John C. Storey and George Alley were appointed to the Boyle circuit, then extending from Castlereagh, on the borders of the county of Galway, through Roscommon and Leitrim and into the county of Cavan. Mr. Alley says he preached, as a rule, every evening in the year, Saturdays included, and slept in a different bed each night in the month. The preachers rarely met otherwise than on the open road, as they drove from opposite ends of the circuit, and then notes were compared, and work laid out for another month, when they met again. A blessed revival broke out in Drumshanbo and its neighbourhood, and large numbers were brought to Christ. Amongst those thus converted was a daughter of Mr. Glover Laird, jun.,* Mrs. Mark Crawford, who for nearly thirty years adorned the doctrine of the Lord her Saviour, and then entered into everlasting rest.

The Rev. John Wilson was sent to the Downpatrick circuit, on which, at Saintfield, with two good women by his side, he made his first attempt at street preaching. This he followed up in other places, and at last in Downpatrick itself, where he had frequently on a fair-day some thousand hearers, most of whom were Roman Catholics.

Two circumstances occurred which contributed largely to improve the financial condition of the Primitive Wesleyan Society. In August the Evangelical Alliance met in Dublin, and was attended by some of the most eminent Christian ministers and laymen of England and Scotland. These were invited to breakfast in South Great George's street, and statements were made with regard to the principles and operations of the Society which excited considerable practical sympathy, and opened the way for securing subsequently much financial assistance. The labours of Mr. John Heatley, on the Kerry mission, having been specially owned from on high, he was visited by some Scotch ministers, who came over for the purpose of seeing his method of work, and were so pleased with what they saw that they invited him to their pulpits. Thus the sphere of the deputation work in Scotland, which for many years realized £1,000 per annum, was greatly enlarged and rendered more permanent.

Towards the close of the year the Wesleyan Society sustained a serious loss in the death of Mr. George Chapman of Trummery.

* *Vide* vol. ii., p. 117.

One Saturday night in the course of the summer he had a pleasing dream, which on the following morning he related to the members of his class. He said that he saw James Creevy, who had died five years previously, and that he looked so beautiful that he could not refrain from saying when he was about to leave, "Brother Creevy, I will go with you." The other replied, "Nay, brother Chapman, you cannot come with me now, but I will return for you at Christmas." This dream, like many others, was soon forgotten, but when Mr. Chapman died on the following Christmas Day the memory of the intimation thus strangely given was at once revived. The end of Mr. Chapman was a blessed and glorious triumph over the last enemy, such as has not been often witnessed.*

* Lynn's Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, pp. 106-7.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1853.

As the town of Belfast continued to extend, the Society felt deeply the necessity for a chapel in the neighbourhood of Shankhill. Here, in 1826, a class of twenty-four members existed. Towards the close of 1843 the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry refers to having secured a lease of a plot of ground for a new building, but nothing further in the matter appears to have been done then. Prayer-meetings were held for some time in Harkin's court, then in Kennedy's buildings, and about 1847 two houses in the former place were thrown into one for a mission-hall, which was opened by the Rev. Daniel Macafee. At length a suitable site having been secured in Agnes street, the foundation-stone of a new building was laid on Monday, May 24th, 1852, by Mr. Joseph Young. This edifice was fifty-two feet by thirty-two and a half, with accommodation for about three hundred and fifty persons, and cost £650. On Sunday, February 6th, 1853, it was opened for religious worship by the Rev. William Reilly, who preached in the morning from John iii. 16, and the Rev. Daniel Macafee, who discoursed in the afternoon from Matthew xvi. 18. Mr. Reilly also preached in the evening in Frederick street chapel, from 2 Corinthians v. 20. The collections amounted to £63.* This was the seventeenth Methodist chapel built in the town.

The Rev. Robert G. Cather, A.M., having been for some years deeply impressed with the importance of systematic giving towards the maintenance and extension of religion and charity, succeeded at length in directing the attention of the various branches of the Christian Church to the subject. This was effected in the first instance by inducing a number of gentlemen in the north of Ireland, of different Evangelical Churches, to contribute

* Wedgwood's Handbook of Belfast Methodism, p. 21.

£5 each, to form a fund from which were offered two prizes for the best and second best essays on "Giving in Proportion to Means and Income." There were fifty-one competitors. Five ministers—Thomas Drew, D.D., John Edgar, D.D., William Urwick, D.D., William P. Appelbe, LL.D., and Robert G. Cather, A.M.—acted as adjudicators; and after seven months careful and independent investigation, each gave his verdict in favour of a different writer. On consultation, however, it was agreed that those chosen had in their conjoint capacity treated the subject in a manner so able and interesting, and had so fully exhausted it, that the whole five essays should be published in one volume, without prejudice to any. This was done, and the book entitled "Gold and the Gospel." Two Churchmen, a Presbyterian, a Congregationalist, a Baptist, and a Wesleyan each ordered a thousand copies of this work for distribution amongst the ministers and members of their respective Churches. The blessed results of the movement thus started, in the increased financial resources rendered available for Christian work, have been truly marvellous. For his exertions in connection with this work Mr. Cather received the thanks of the Irish Wesleyan Conference.

On March 22nd the Rev. John Walker writes from Nenagh thus: "On my present station Roman Catholics hear me in every place I preach, and not a few are in the Society who have been saved, not only from the errors of Rome, but from sin and Satan, and brought into the liberty of the children of God. Scarcely a day passes that your missionary has not protracted conversations with Roman Catholics, on the leading doctrines of the Gospel as different from those taught by the traditions of men. The poor and the rich, the learned and the ignorant converse freely, frequently admit the truth as opposed to the errors in which they have been brought up, and receive tracts, pamphlets, and books, either as gifts or loans, with thankfulness and delight. I know several persons, still nominally connected with Rome, who are convinced of the absurdities and falsehoods of the system, and who, like Nicodemus, come for instruction by night, but are afraid to brave persecution by openly confessing Christ."*

The reports from some of the mission stations, at the close

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1853, p. 494.

of the year, were cheering. The Rev. Henry Geddes of Kilrush says, "At Tulla we have formed a new class, of which some of the members have been brought to God and maintain consistency and integrity of character. We have nearly completed, at Kilkee, a neat and commodious chapel, a desideratum which was long felt and deplored by many of our friends who, year after year, visited this popular bathing-place. At Tarbert we have been cheered by a few brought out of darkness into marvellous light. Amongst the saved was a Roman Catholic girl, who having left Popery and embraced the truth as it is in Jesus, endured a living martyrdom at the hands of her relatives. They confined her, beat her, and dragged her to mass; yet she clung to the Cross, and by Scriptural truth put to silence the priest. She is now with our mission teacher, enjoying the comforts of the Gospel." From Galway the Rev. James Murdock writes, "In the course of the past year God has greatly blessed us in this interesting field of labour. The visit of the general missionary in December was graciously owned of God. Preparatory services were held every evening of the week before he came, the hearts of our friends were raised to expect great things, and they were not disappointed. The power of God was present to heal in all our assemblies, which were held each morning as well as each evening; fourteen, including one Romanist, testified that they had obtained peace with God, and several of our elder members professed to have obtained the blessing of a clean heart." The Rev. Thomas W. Baker of Belmullet and Erris reports, "The long-felt and much-needed want of chapel accommodation at Rossport has been supplied by the erection of a house which, though built and fitted up for the twofold purpose of chapel and school, is nevertheless neat and substantial. This edifice was formally opened by the Rev. Robert Bell, on May 18th, when between ninety and a hundred persons, Protestants and Roman Catholics, united in the worship of God. We were also enabled, about the same time, to commence a day-school, which will prove an invaluable aid to the missionary and a blessing to the rising generation in the country around."

In January the Rev. William G. Campbell visited the south-eastern part of the kingdom, specially the Waterford, Wexford, Newtownbarry, and Wicklow circuits, and on each had tokens of

the power of Christ to forgive sins. The services in Nenagh, Killaloe, and Mountshannon were very cheering, and those in Ennis good. There were refreshing services at Youghal and Fermoy, and at Tralee and Berehaven Mines much cause for thankfulness. Hallowed times of blessing were experienced at Skibbereen and Bandon, more especially the latter, where the gracious Lord had been pouring out "a plentiful rain" to confirm His inheritance. At Kinsale there were some happy conversions. "Thus end," says Mr. Campbell, "my visits to sixty-seven stations during the year. I have travelled about six thousand miles, and held services in parts of each of the thirty-two counties. I have addressed hundreds, if not thousands, of Romanists, and in many instances engaged with them in prayer. I also distributed numbers of tracts, as well as portions of God's Word. My conviction remains unaltered that since the days of the Reformation there have not been greater facilities for access to the Roman Catholic population than at present." *

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Cork, the preparatory committees commencing on June 17th, and the Conference on June 22nd. The chair was occupied by the Rev. John Scott, who was accompanied by the Revs. Dr. Hannah and Dr. Beecham. The Rev. William Arthur was also present. William Gorman of Limerick, Samuel, son of the Rev. James Patterson, James Donnelly, and Thomas Cooke were received on trial. One of the ministerial brethren, William M'Garvey of Cloughjordan, had passed from time into eternity, and with his last accents had borne testimony to the Divinity of that religion which he had preached in life and the power of which sustained him in death. Although the Society had lost seven hundred and fifty-eight members by emigration alone, and there was therefore a decrease of four hundred and thirty-two, the prospects of the kingdom, both commercially and religiously, were considered more hopeful than for some years previously. Public confidence was in some measure restored, and notwithstanding the special efforts put forth to maintain and perpetuate Popery, a spirit of religious inquiry was awakened, and some who had long submitted to Papal domination had shaken off the oppressed yoke. In order to occupy two additional posts as centres of home-missionary operations, it was deemed right,

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1853.

however, to discontinue the general mission, which had been so graciously owned of God; but it was agreed that at the ensuing August district meetings arrangements should be made for a general ministerial visitation of all circuits and missions, to endeavour by special services to promote a revival of the work of God. The Revs. Robert Masaroon and William P. Appelbe, LL.D., were chosen to accompany Mr. Waugh as representatives to the British Conference.

Two very important resolutions were passed by this Conference, having reference respectively to the raising and the distribution of money contributed towards the support of the work throughout the Connexion. It was agreed that inquiry should be made at the August district meetings, whether arrangements could be made to increase the Contingent Fund, by the holding of public meetings or the preaching of sermons on its behalf, and if so, that they should be carried out. Such was the origin of the Circuit Aid and Extension Fund, which at the close of the year amounted to £416 2*s.* 8*d.*, and which proved the beginning of a most successful movement for the improvement of ministerial support and the increase of the number of ministers. The second resolution was, "That at each May district meeting a lay gentleman, being a member of the Society, shall be chosen to be a member of the Committee of Distribution of the Contingent Fund." This measure was largely due to the influence of Mr. Thomas A. Shillington. He was long of opinion that all departments of the work involving the raising and administration of funds should be managed by a mixed rather than by an exclusively ministerial committee. At the Portadown May district meeting of 1847 he moved a resolution to the effect that "the addition of a number of lay members, as representatives of districts, to the Committee of the Contingent Fund would increase the interest in its favour amongst the members of the Societies;" and this passed unanimously, but the Conference did not consider it expedient at that time to adopt the proposal. Nothing daunted, Mr. Shillington raised the question again in the ensuing year, and after a lengthened discussion, withdrew his resolution on the assurance that the matter would be brought before the Conference; but this undertaking was not effectively carried out. The subject was then wisely allowed to drop, on

account of the agitation in the British Connexion, until the Conference of 1852, when Mr. Shillington wrote a strong letter to the Rev. Thomas Waugh on the subject, and this led to a successful issue. The principle then admitted has been adhered to, and so agreeable and successful has been its operation that it is now hard to believe that it was ever regarded, by godly and sensible men, with such distrust and apprehension.*

In addition to the £200 given by the Irish Wesleyan ministers, in 1851, to the fund instituted in England for the relief of ministers deprived of their ordinary circuit allowances by the Reform agitation, a further grant of £1,000 was made this year. It is acknowledged in the reply of the British Conference to the Irish Address thus: "One special proof of your fraternal regard has deeply affected us—your noble contribution towards the relief of our financial embarrassments, conveyed to us by Mr. Waugh. That amidst all the claims which are made upon you, in your peculiar sphere of labour, you should have been disposed to contribute no less a sum than £1,000 towards the supply of our present wants, is matter of surprise and thankfulness. We acknowledge the gift with gratitude, and take it as a token for good, and confirmation of our long-continued union."

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference, according to appointment, met on June 29th, in the preaching-house, South Great George's street, Dublin. Mr. Joseph M'Cormick was chosen President, and Mr. William H. Mervyn re-elected Secretary. Two candidates were admitted on trial, one of whom was William B. Monahan of Ballinamallard. One death was reported, that of George Stewart of Lowtherstown. Mr. Robert Sewell had retired in order to take charge of a Congregational Church, and Mr. William P. Skuse to emigrate to Australia, but on his way to the land of his adoption and before the Conference assembled had passed to the better land. Two brethren, Alexander Stewart and William Pattyson, having laboured long and faithfully, became supernumeraries. There was a decrease in the membership of two hundred and eighty-five, but the financial state of the Society was considered most cheering. In order to leave Mr. Heather free to solicit subscriptions in England and Scotland, the

* Memorial of T. A. Shillington, J.P., pp. 128-34.

country was divided into seven districts, and a preacher appointed to each to attend missionary meetings.

A young man named Richard Williams was appointed, by the Primitive Wesleyan Society, a Scripture-reader at Whitegate, in the county of Cork. Earnest and diligent in his hallowed work, he endeavoured to bring the light of Divine truth to bear on the ignorance and degradation of his fellow-countrymen, but was met by fiendish and bloodthirsty malice. In consequence of the bitter persecution which he endured, he had to attend the petty sessions to give evidence against some of those who had treated him so cruelly. On the evening of that day a mob was harangued by a priest, who made such allusions to Williams that the people became excited, again assaulted the defenceless Scripture-reader, and inflicted on him such serious injury that he lingered in great suffering a few months, and then passed home to heaven, a martyr to the malice and intolerance of Popery.

One of the honorary secretaries of the Evangelical Alliance proposed, as a means of spreading Gospel truth in Ireland, that a hundred ministers should go from Great Britain to this country, preach five sermons a week each for four weeks, and receive no remuneration. The proposal was at once adopted, the required number of ministers of different Evangelical denominations volunteered their services, and at the end of July left Dublin for their respective scenes of labour, more especially in the south and west. The mission thus undertaken, with the best intentions, proved a signal failure. Men who were total strangers, however wise and good, could not expect to be as successful as others who had spent their lives in the country and were intimately acquainted with the people. Besides, the missionaries were preceded by a flourish of trumpets announcing their purpose and anticipating their success; and thus before ever setting a foot in the kingdom, they were denounced from every altar from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear. So long as these messengers of the Gospel confined their ministrations to the Methodist, Presbyterian, and other places of worship which were cheerfully placed at their disposal, their labours were gratefully appreciated; but as soon as they attempted to preach in the open air they were met by furious mobs, and in general compelled to take to flight. At Nenagh a rabble of Romanists assailed them with sticks and

mud, and but for the timely interference of the police, serious consequences would have followed. At Parsonstown the missionaries obtained a hearing from many Romanists, notwithstanding the placards posted up by the priests, warning their people not to listen to the intruders, and should they chance to meet them, to make the sign of the cross between them. Had the authorities in Limerick acted with the same decision as those in Parsonstown, the ministers would not have been hissed and assailed with stones as they were. At Clonmel six of the missionaries, having taken their stand in a suitable place in the open air, endeavoured to hold a religious service, but were received by a mob of not less than four thousand persons with such a storm of hisses, yells, and groans that the attempt had to be given up in despair. Stones, cabbages, and other missiles were then hurled at the strangers. One minister was thrown down, and saved from being trampled to death by Mr. Joseph Higgins; and another of the band, in trying to dash through the crowd, was saved by the Rev. John Saul, who himself received very rough usage. The mayor then interfered, with a body of police, and escorted the ministers to their lodgings. Similar scenes took place elsewhere. One good, at least, resulted from this evangelistic effort; it revealed to the British public the real character of Popery, the intolerance of the system, the power of the priests, and the tremendous difficulties to be encountered by the preachers of the Gospel in this land. Many thought that the condition of the Romanists was to be traced to indolence and want of courage on the part of Irish ministers; but they were now undeceived. One of the hundred, in commencing his tour, preached in a Wesleyan chapel, selected for his text, "For by thee I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall," and the sermon was very glowing, reminding the hearers of Job's description of a war-horse, so eager did the preacher appear to reach the battle-field. At the end of three or four days his courage cooled, having only once attempted to hold a service, during which, amid a serious riot, he received a slight wound, and then turned his face homewards. On the following Sabbath he occupied the pulpit of the Wesleyan chapel again, and his text was, "My soul cleaveth to the dust"!

From Kilrush the Rev. Henry Geddes writes, "Our chapel at Kilkee was opened for Divine worship on Sunday, September 11th.

We were favoured with the valuable services of the Rev. Samuel Young, whose discourses were listened to with marked attention, delight, and profit. A policeman, a Romanist, who was sent to protect us during the first service, heard with the deepest interest, and was not only convinced of the errors of Popery, but powerfully awakened to a sense of his danger as a sinner before God. Some days afterwards he sent for me, opened his mind, was instructed in the way of salvation by faith in Christ, and sought and found the pardoning mercy of God, in the possession of which he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. Expecting not only opposition from his friends, but persecution, he gave up his situation and left for Australia. Before sailing he wrote to me thus: 'My confidence in the Lord is unshaken, and His presence cheers and sustains me in all my difficulties. There are a great many Romanists on board, but God is good to all who put their trust in Him, and I do not fear but He will bring me safely to my destination. I have many enemies in consequence of having left Popery—the curse and ruin of Ireland—and for having embraced the truth, in which I now rejoice. I never can be sufficiently thankful to God, who directed my way to your little chapel at Kilkee, where, for the first time in my life, I heard the blessed Gospel, and never can I cease praising God for the change wrought in me through Jesus Christ.'"

The Rev. James Henry fitted up and opened for religious services a room in Clifden; and although interruptions, occasioned by clamour and throwing of stones, were frequent, and continued for several weeks, there were those who would not suffer themselves to be prevented from attending the meetings. At length, through the interference of the authorities, this open opposition ceased, and the congregations were permitted to worship God in peace. The services proved seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, those attending them were greatly blessed, and two at least were savingly converted. One of these had been a Romanist, who had never before attended a Protestant place of worship; and the other was the head constable of the district, a fine young man, in the bloom of health, but, a few weeks after his conversion, "nipt by the wind's unkindly blast," he peacefully passed to the home above. At Oughterard a friend whose heart the Lord had opened when she was young, and her husband,

opened their house for preaching, a good number of persons attended, and a few members were enrolled in the Society.

A letter from the Rev. Gibson M'Millen, dated Westport, October 19th, is worthy of notice. He says, "One Sunday, on my return home from evening service, as I passed two or three persons standing nearly opposite a priest's house, my attention was arrested by one of them calling 'Jumper' at a member of my congregation. It occurred to me that an occasion was given of introducing the Gospel to those who might never otherwise hear it, so I halted, and asked the speaker what he meant by the term he had used. 'Your reverence,' he said, 'it means a rebel against lawful authority, all as one as a rebel against the Queen's Government.' 'I always understood it to be a term of religious reproach,' I replied, 'and if so we are all Jumpers. If our forefathers had not jumped from Paganism to Christianity we might have been all Pagans to this day.' My application of the term was new to him; he made no reply, and then recovering himself, put the question, 'What is the oldest religion?' This was an excellent text, and afforded me an opportunity of explaining the nature as well as proving the antiquity of Bible Christianity. Our conversation assumed the form of a regular discussion, and the hearers rapidly increased. The crowd, however, attracted the attention of the priest, who mistaking me for one of the hundred, determined to repel by every means in his power the English invasion. He first endeavoured to drive away the people from about me, and for this purpose raised his hand, with a rod in it, and commanded them to be off; but I stood, and determined to keep my ground. Having driven back the crowd, he walked up, held his clenched hand to my face, and said, 'You rascal, you!' I made no reply. 'Be off,' he then said, 'my good fellow, be off, or I will not answer for your life.' Still I was silent and stood firm. As a final effort, he shouted as loudly as he could, 'You are a marked man! mind that; you are a marked man!' One of his own flock now informed him who I was, so his reverence became much calmer, requested me to go home, and assured me he only wished to save me. 'Save me!' I replied; 'it was a most singular way to save me, to act towards me in the manner you have done, and call me a rascal.' A little fellow then shouted at me, 'You are a rascal,' and at the instant some one from

behind tripped me over and threw me on my back. His reverence perceiving that his sympathizers were only few, and that a respectable person whom he knew approached me, retreated to his house; and I retired slowly, without hearing any expressions of reproach. Far from being discouraged by the opposition I have met with, I have every reason to rejoice. My opportunities of addressing Romanists are increasingly frequent; and I have reason to hope that the seed sown does not fall by the way-side."

On November 3rd the Rev. Samuel Young writes, "I have just returned from a long journey to the north, having visited the schools and taken part in opening the chapel at New Buildings. This edifice is built on the spot where the Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke preached his first sermon, and this fact created much interest in the neighbourhood. There is reason to hope that the day of the opening service will not soon be forgotten, as twenty-five persons came forward in the Derry chapel, after the sermon in the evening, and with tears and earnestness sought an interest in Christ, some of whom were comforted. I was very much pleased with the state of the schools, but am sorry that some of them have suffered considerably from the late denunciations of the priests, and the Church schools have suffered more than ours. Some of the children say that they will not rest until they get back again to our schools. With gratitude to God I mention the narrow escape I had, at Bellaghy, from being seriously injured, if not mortally wounded, by a stone thrown with great force from behind a wall opposite our school-house door, while I was standing about a yard inside, talking to the master and another friend. We had no means of finding out who had thrown it or why it was done, but we thought it was on the supposition of my being one of the hundred ministers who visited these parts. I am happy to inform you that the deputations of the districts are doing their work well, and in some cases they have witnessed the conversion of a number of souls to Christ. It is doing both ministers and people good. Nothing has done the ministers so much good for years; all needed baptizing with a missionary spirit, and this plan has created a kind of Christian emulation amongst the brethren. I had letters this morning informing me of the conversion of ten souls to Christ in one place, and six in another. You will be glad to hear of the success of this new plan."

CHAPTER XXXV.

1854.

The Wesleyan Society in Belfast having obtained the use of the loft of an old bark mill in Greenhills court, off Falls road, it was turned into a mission-room, in which, for a few years, prayer-meetings and other religious services were held. Mr. John Caruth soon formed a class in it, and then another in an adjoining street. Mr. James H. Beattie also commenced a Sunday-school, of which Mr. Richard Wiggins, who subsequently entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, America, was the secretary. Thus the good work continued to extend until it was felt desirable that a chapel should be erected. A suitable site was then secured, a building committee formed, and arrangements made for completing the undertaking. The foundation-stone of the new house was laid by Mr. David M'Connell, on May 25th, 1853, and it was opened for public worship by the Rev. John H. James, in the spring of 1854. Such was the origin of the Fall's road Wesleyan chapel, the eighteenth Methodist preaching-house erected in the town.

The labours of the Primitive Wesleyans also in Belfast were attended with cheering success. Mr. Charles Skuse, the superintendent of the circuit, writes, "Our lovefeasts have been truly times of refreshing; no exhortations were necessary to induce the people to speak, not a moment remained unoccupied, and though the December meeting continued for four hours, it was with regret we had to bring it to a close. Many seemed still wishful to remain. Several penitents openly signified their willingness to dedicate themselves to the service of God, and were made happy in His forgiving love. Not a week passes but we are favoured with tokens of God's blessing. An association of lads, to the number of sixty, has been formed; it meets weekly

for prayer, and all the members appear to be going on well, walking in the fear of God. The number of meetings, for preaching or prayer, held weekly in the town and neighbourhood is about thirty-six, and I am informed there never was a time when these services could be more easily multiplied, had we a sufficient number of persons qualified to conduct them. Our Sunday-schools also are in a prosperous state." *

The Primitive Wesleyans of Belleek feeling deeply the necessity for a suitable place of worship, secured an eligible site, rent free for ever, from John C. Bloomfield, Esq., who also laid the foundation-stone of the new edifice, and gave a handsome subscription towards its erection. In due time a neat and commodious chapel was built, and on Sunday, May 24th, it was set apart for the service of God by Mr. James Griffin. On the following evening a tea-meeting was held, at which the treasurer submitted his accounts, and it was found that the house was almost free of debt.†

Indications appear of the attention that was now given to the subject of increased ministerial support. Thus at Sligo, at a special meeting of the Wesleyan leaders held on February 23rd, it was resolved first, "That we recognise the fact, too often overlooked, that financial difficulties have been hindering spiritual prosperity;" secondly, "That we feel convinced that this state of things cannot continue, and are assured that it need not; and we are further convinced in respect to the times, the number and necessities of our congregations, and the admirable adaptation of Methodism to the evangelization of this land, there is a loud call to the present members of the Church conscientiously to devote a portion of their substance to the support of God's cause;" and lastly, "That the Drogheda scale of stipend should be adopted, viz.; £70 per annum to the senior minister, and £30 to the junior," who lodged in the manse and boarded out.

The Rev. Samuel Young, in his annual report to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee, states, "There is a considerable increase in the Sunday-schools, and also in the attendants on public worship. This is matter of gratitude, especially at a time when we have to meet such united and determined opposition. I informed you

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1854, pp. 109-10.

† *Ibid*, pp. 305-6.

that the schools had suffered considerably from the denunciations of the priests; but they are now gradually recovering from the shock, and I believe we never had so many Roman Catholic children in them as now. The parents say they get no such instruction in any other schools, nor so much kindness shown them; hence when the children are detained at home they weep until allowed to go again." *

The sad effects of the visit of the hundred ministers from England and Scotland became increasingly apparent. The Rev. John Walker of Nenagh and Killaloe says, "Never had your missionary so many hindrances and persecutions as during the last year. I thought it right to render what assistance I could to the hundred ministers in autumn, and consequently received my share of the pelting and hooting. Since then, on different occasions and on several parts of the missions, I have realized the true spirit of Popery—what it was, it is, and ever will be. But British law, thank God, when rightly administered, protects us, and some of the persecutors have felt its strong arm, yet it is sometimes rendered powerless by bigotry. At one time, in the country, a stone was thrown which struck both myself and a friend who was with me, yet, thanks to our gracious Preserver, neither of us was injured. In another place I was the subject of a priestly tirade, and two shopkeepers who received me into their houses have been so held up to notice that they decline to do so again. 'If they receive *Poulagoonah*,' said his reverence, 'I will make the grass grow at their doors.' Death, removal, and emigration have done their work in thinning our ranks, taking away some of our best people, so that we may say, 'If the Lord had not been on our side when they rose up against us, they would have swallowed us up quick.' Yet we have not to report a decrease either in our members or funds. 'It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'"

From Killala the Rev. Samuel Johnston writes, "It is with unfeigned gratitude to the Head of the Church your missionary reports the state of this mission. Last year it was his lot to record the opposition Wesleyan Methodism had to contend with, but during this year it has increased ten-fold. Seldom or never has it been the lot of any Society to have to bear so much obloquy and

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1854, p. 563.

to contend with so much unrighteous opposition. The pulpit and the press have both been used as vehicles of the vilest slander against Wesleyan Methodism as a system, as well as against the moral character of its people; but it may be truly said, 'The things which have happened unto us, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel.' None of these things moved our members or friends, but the privileges and advantages that the Society affords have been more and more prized by them. In Killala our congregations have considerably improved, the ordinances of the sanctuary have been well attended, and the number in the Society is nearly double what it was when this mission was established two years ago. Our Sunday and daily schools have also increased considerably, and are likely, under God, to be made a great blessing."

Concerning Ballymena the Rev. Edward Best reports, "It has been cheering, midst the labours of the year, to witness the spirit of deep and serious interest in the word preached manifested by large and attentive congregations, and above all to see on several occasions as many as twenty persons kneel around our communion rails, as penitent seekers of salvation, most of whom have rejoiced in God their Saviour. Our chapel in Ballymena was for some years in a state of dilapidation, and required extensive alterations to render it suitable for our large congregations. Stimulated by a deep conviction of its importance, and by the kind co-operation of a few friends, this work was commenced in December, important improvements were completed, at a cost of £148, which has been nearly all paid, and the house is now comfortable and generally admired." *

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Dublin, the preparatory committees beginning on June 16th, and the Conference itself on the 21st. The chair was occupied by the Rev. John Lomas, who was accompanied from England by the Revs. John Scott and John Farrar. Five ministers had in the course of the year passed from their toil on earth to their reward in heaven. One of these, William Lupton of Limerick, was in the vigour and prime of his work; and four, William Stewart of Dublin, Samuel Kyle of Pettigo, John Waugh of Skibbereen, and Robert Carson of Omagh, were supernumeraries. The Rev. John Greer was elected, by

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1854.

nomination, a member of the Legal Conference, in place of Mr. Stewart. John D. Powell, who had been sent from England as a supply to the Skibbereen circuit, was received as having travelled two years; and William, son of Mr. James H. Swanton of Skibbereen, Francis Douglass of Dungannon, Wilson J. Storey, William C. Doonan, and two others were admitted on trial. The decrease in the number of members was three hundred and seventy-five, but the loss by emigration was seven hundred and forty-two. In the Address to the British Conference it is said, "In many places, where we had large and flourishing Societies, we have now scarcely any left; and the prospect we had that our cause would be promoted and extended in these neighbourhoods has, for the present, become less promising. But compared with preceding years, the decrease thus caused is small, while in a greater number of circuits than at any time during the last ten years we have an increase. And regarding the state of our Societies generally, their devotion to God and loyalty to His cause, we are hopeful that soon we shall witness better days than ever."

Two or three subjects of great importance received special consideration. The question of Education now came to the front in a way that it had not done previously. No Connexional system was in existence; the schools established being chiefly confined to mission stations, it was felt that some provision ought to be made for the more general instruction of the children of Methodists, and that if schools were established extensively, assistance might be obtained from Government on unobjectionable terms. Accordingly a committee was appointed to observe the workings of the National system, and make known the views and wishes of the members to the Government. As there was no institution for the education of the children of ministers, the inquiry arose whether the Connexional School could not be so enlarged and modified as to admit the sons of ministers as well as those of the laity, and a mixed committee was also appointed to take this subject into consideration.* The sum of money, however, necessary for the success of these projects was so large that the Methodists of Ireland were unable alone to furnish it; therefore it was further resolved that a deputation should be appointed to visit the United States and Canada and solicit assistance; but the

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1854, pp. 820-21.

carrying out of this was postponed until the proposals were matured. The Rev. Robert Masaroon was appointed treasurer of the Worn-out Ministers' and Ministers' Widows' Fund, and the Rev. William Cather secretary, and the Revs. Daniel Macafee and Robinson Scott were elected to accompany Mr. Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference.

On June 28th the preachers of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference assembled in the chapel, South Great George's street, Dublin, and on the following day were joined by the lay representatives. Mr. Thomas M'Fann was elected President, and Mr. James Griffin Secretary. Six candidates were admitted on trial. These included John Ker of Meaghy, near Newtownstewart, John Todd of Lisbellaw, and Alexander Elliott. Three of the brethren had been removed by death during the year. One, John Noble of Lowtherstown, had been for several years laid aside from the regular work; and two, John Stephenson of Sligo and Richard Robinson of Boyle, were actively engaged in the Master's service when called to their eternal reward. Although there was a decrease in the membership of nearly seventeen hundred, it is said, "We have been cheered in hearing that upon several of our stations there are marked indications of a revival of the Lord's work. The statements of some of the brethren have been intensely interesting and delightful, and we are led to look forward to the year upon which we are entering as one of great prosperity."

The most important act of the Conference was the appointment of Mr. Dawson D. Heather as a deputation to America, to solicit subscriptions on behalf of the Superannuated Preachers' and Preachers' Widows' Fund and other funds of the Society. This having been communicated to Evangelical ministers in the New World, they made arrangements to receive the deputation with fraternal affection. He was welcomed as Dr. Heather, leading ministers opened their pulpits to him, and a committee was formed to facilitate his work. Great excitement also prevailed amongst those once connected with the Society who had made America the land of their adoption. The presence of the Irish preacher awakened in them touching memories of the past; they remembered the days of their youth, when in the dear old country they had listened to the story of the Cross from the itinerants,

and were thus led to religious decision, not a few looking upon Dr. Heather as their spiritual father. Wherever he preached crowds of Irish men and women flocked to hear him, and in some instances with no little difficulty he made his way to the pulpit. On most of these occasions the scenes were deeply affecting. Some wept aloud for joy, many embraced him with warm affection, and frequently such exclamations were heard as, "Oh, but I'm glad to see you! Do you remember when you used to preach in my father's house? It was there I was converted." "Do you recollect the night I found peace in W—— O——'s barn? I shall never forget that night." "Do you remember the day you met me in the streets of B——, a poor ragged boy, and brought me to the Sabbath-school? To that I trace all the good I have ever enjoyed; and if I have an abundance of this world's goods and an honourable position in society, I owe it all, under God, to you." American ministers and laymen looked on with amazement, and saw evidence of the good done by the Society in Ireland that they had no conception of previously. Notwithstanding the commercial depression in the country, Dr. Heather was enabled to accomplish his mission, and secure such a sum of money as placed the funds of the Society in an easy position, and enabled it to extend its operations.*

About twelve months previous to this, James Oliver of Mullantur was converted, and soon began to exercise an influence for good in the neighbourhood. He had previously been engaged as a Sunday-school teacher, and in about six months began to hold meetings. An old leader said of him, "We will do with James as they do with children in India. They throw them into the Ganges; if they sink, all right, and if they swim they are considered worth rearing. We will leave James to himself: if he sinks, no harm; and if he swims, all right." And swim he did, for the attendance at the meetings greatly increased, and so did their number, until the young convert had more invitations than he could attend to. At one of these services, held in his mother's house, John Carson and two others found mercy. The good work thus begun spread, until about thirteen lads decided for Christ, and were formed into a Society class, with Mr. Oliver as their leader. One of this little band, John Carson, subsequently

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1862, pp. 369-70.

entered the itinerancy in Ireland, two became ministers in America, and most of the others rose to positions of usefulness as leaders and local preachers.

During the appointment of the Rev. William G. Campbell to the Lowtherstown circuit in 1849-51 a gracious revival had taken place, which was followed by a considerable reaction. Now, however, through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Revs. Frederick Elliott and John Wilson, the tide began to turn. Towards the close of the year a plan was formed by which they together devoted their time and energies for several days in succession to the most important centres on the circuit. This proved very successful, so that a good work commenced, which culminated at Ballinamallard, while Trillick, Togherdoo, and Lack were richly blessed.* Open-air services also were held on market-days, and proved a means of much good.

In Dublin the necessity for increased chapel accommodation was deeply felt, and led to the erection of three places of worship. One of these was a Bethel for sailors in Lombard street, built in 1847; the second was a kind of chapel-schoolhouse in Oriel street, erected in 1850; and the third, being the seventeenth Methodist chapel in Dublin, was at Rathmines. For a period of twenty-five years the Wesleyan chapel at Ranelagh was the only Protestant place of worship in the township; but in 1826, through the exertions of a gentleman who frequently attended the Methodist services, an Episcopal church was erected, and that was succeeded in time by four others, a Presbyterian meeting-house, and a Baptist chapel. Methodism, however, prospered so much in this neighbourhood during the appointments of the Rev. Gibson M'Millen (1846-49) and the Rev. Joseph W. M'Kay (1849-52) as to render the erection of new premises indispensable. These, including a beautiful chapel and residence, were completed, under the direction of the Rev. Wallace M'Mullen, at a cost of £1,700, and the opening services were conducted in September, 1854, by the Revs. John Bedford and William Arthur, A.M.†

In 1850 the Rev. Wallace M'Mullen was appointed to Coleraine, and did an important work in commencing the erection of a new chapel and minister's residence. The progress of the age

* Unpublished autobiographical sketch of Rev. F. Elliott.

† *Irish Evangelist*, 1863, p. 117.

and the decaying influence of time on the structure which had been used for more than half a century required a change, so that the necessity for more attractive and commodious premises was long felt. Accordingly, after much thought and deliberation, it was resolved that the necessary buildings should be erected on the plot of ground immediately in the rear of the old chapel and dwelling-house, and facing a new road from the bridge to the Portrush road. Arrangements were made for a tea-meeting, to see what could be done to meet the necessary outlay. This was held in 1852; at it a subscription-list was opened, and a sum of £1,600 was promised by the members of the Society and congregation alone. Additional subscriptions were afterwards liberally given by members of other religious denominations in the town, and plans were drawn out by Mr. Isaac Farrell. An interesting service, in connection with laying the foundation-stone, took place on May 17th, 1853. The stone was laid by John Cromie, Esq., D.L., and suitable addresses were delivered by Mr. M'Elwain and the Rev. Mr. M'Mullen. The new residence was ready for occupation before the Conference of 1854; during the year the Rev. William Reilly was stationed on the circuit, and the taking possession of it was made by him the occasion of an interesting social gathering. The opening services of the new and beautiful chapel were held on Friday, September 8th, when the Rev. William Arthur preached at noon, from Acts ii. 3. The congregation listened with intense interest to the discourse, and were moved to tears by the powerful appeals of the preacher. In the evening the Rev. Wallace M'Mullen preached from Psalm lxxxvii. 5, 6, and his sermon was distinguished by that chasteness of style, lucidness of exposition, and beauty of illustration for which he is so remarkable. On the following Sabbath the Rev. Robinson Scott conducted a devotional meeting in the morning, the Rev. William Arthur preached in the afternoon from Revelation xxii. 1, and the Rev. William Reilly discoursed in the evening from John iii. 16. The attendance was good at all the services, more especially those on the Sabbath, when it was difficult to find accommodation for the multitudes who desired to attend. The collections amounted to £124 7*s.* 6*d.* It is worthy of notice that at a breakfast-meeting held at this time in the house of the Rev. James Tobias, at which the above and other Wesleyan ministers

were present, was projected an outline of the plan of the Fund for the Increase of Wesleyan Agency in Ireland, which did such an important work in this country. After the above opening services, the old chapel was altered to suit a Sabbath-school and other purposes. The entire outlay on the premises amounted to £2,540, which, with the assistance of £200 from the Chapel Fund, was paid off, leaving no debt. The subscriptions included £1,000 from Mr. and Mrs. M'Elwain, £350 from the Hon. the Irish Society, £50 from the Worshipful the Company of Clothworkers, £50 from Mr. and Mrs. William M'Arthur, £50 from Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, £25 from Mr. Thomas Boyle, and £20 each from Lord Naas, Mr. Cromie, Mr. Canning, and Mr. Thomas Gordon.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1855.

A GREAT impetus was given in Ireland to the work of spreading the principles of systematic beneficence by securing the valuable co-operation of the Rev. William Arthur, A.M. He delivered a most eloquent and beautiful lecture in the Victoria Hall, Belfast, on "The Duty of Giving Away a Stated Proportion of our Income." The occasion was one of no ordinary interest. The Lord Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore occupied the chair, the platform was filled with leading ministers of the various Evangelical Churches, and the hall was crowded with the *élite* of the Christian laity of Belfast. The lecturer, however, rose to the greatness and importance of the time and the theme, and as in his own clear, incisive, and felicitous style he explained the duty, stated the ground on which it rests, and pleaded for practical attention to it, the audience was greatly impressed and delighted. The subject was thus presented in a much briefer and more popular form than could be done in the prize essays, and many listened to the address with the deepest interest who would never have thought of reading the large volume. The lecture was also published in a cheap form and had a very extensive circulation.

The reports for the year, furnished by the Wesleyan missionaries, present many interesting and cheering items. From Lucan and Trim the Rev. William Lough writes, "To obtain religious intercourse with Roman Catholics is extremely difficult, yet occasion has been sought, and sometimes found by us. A few have attended our services, some have left the Church of Rome or been confirmed in their determination to do so, and there are many upon whose minds conviction has taken hold, but they have not yet mustered sufficient strength to 'come out and be separate.' In one locality a Sunday-school has been commenced, and is principally conducted by young persons who have been

converted to God in the past year." The Rev. Henry J. Giles of Kilkenny says, "In no former year have we had more systematic and persevering opposition to contend with from those who, because of their position in society, wield a mighty influence; but our people have retained their attachment to Methodism, as the means under God of turning them from darkness to light, and while new and imperative claims on their financial resources have arisen, continued to manifest an increasing interest in our institutions by enabling us to report an increase of contributions to nearly all our funds."

At Kilkee the Rev. Henry Geddes formed a new and prosperous class, found that many attended the ministry of the word who never before had an opportunity of hearing a Wesleyan missionary, and had abundant evidence that the new chapel had proved a blessing to both Methodists and others who had visited this neighbourhood. The Rev. William B. Le Bert, who was appointed to Clifden, states, "Our congregation in this town has steadily increased; a class of fourteen members has been formed, with every hope of a speedy accession; the various religious services have been crowned with the Divine blessing, and saving good has accrued to many. Some Roman Catholics occasionally attend our meetings, listen with marked attention to the preaching of the word, and admit that what they hear is the truth. We have effected a new opening at Letterfrack, where we are permitted to use a school-house, and about thirty persons attend; but a most determined opposition has been raised against us by the Protestant clergyman, who is using every measure possible to drive us out of what he calls his parish. The daily schools at Recess and the Fishery are beginning to recover from the priest's interference, and we hope they may soon regain their wonted vigour and efficiency."

Concerning Donegal the Rev. John Feely reports, "Last year we mentioned that no men gave us such direct opposition as those of the so-called Apostolical Succession school. In the course of this year one of this class actually came into the place of worship where one of our missionaries was about to conduct a service, and in language which it is needless to quote, and a manner we need not describe, forced a discussion. It may be trusted, however, that the Christian reception he met with and the controversy he

introduced had a good effect on himself and others. We have no reason to regard this gentleman as the least sincere among his brethren, nor more opposed to our work than others who take a less direct way of neutralizing our efforts." At Ballymena and Antrim it seems the cholera had made its appearance, soon after Conference, and hundreds fell victims to it, but only one Methodist. A most salutary impression, however, was made on the minds of the people, large numbers flocked to the chapels and other preaching-places, and hundreds, including numerous Romanists, attended the services in the open air; but other Churches reaped largely the fruit of these successful labours. The school-house at Tullybane having been roofed and floored, the jealousy of the priest and a few Protestants was excited; they sought in vain to wrest the building from the Society, and then tried to take away the scholars, in which they only partially succeeded.*

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Belfast, and the number of ministers present exceeded that of any previous similar meeting. There were also at the preparatory committees a larger number of influential friends from the country than had been usual. The Conference was opened on June 21st by the President, the Rev. John Farrar, who was accompanied by the Revs. John Scott, John Lomas, and William Arthur, A.M. The Rev. John Hill was elected by seniority a member of the Legal Hundred, in place of the Rev. William Crook, sen., superannuated. The Rev. Joseph W. M'Kay was appointed Assistant Secretary. Six ministers were reported to have died during the year. There were William Ferguson of Dublin, Edward Hazleton of Moy, William Armstrong of Armagh, Michael Burrows of Dublin, Robert Banks of Carlow, and William Finlay of Strabane, all of whom were well stricken in years. In life they were respected and useful, and in death they felt that He whom they had loved and served was able to save them "unto the uttermost." It was unanimously resolved that the members of the Conference should erect a tablet in the Centenary chapel, Dublin, as a token of respect for the memory of William Ferguson, and as an expression of gratitude for his unostentatious and valuable services to the Connexion. John S. M'Dade of Dromore, and Andrew Armstrong were received on trial. The loss of members

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1855.

by emigration was six hundred and ten, while the net decrease amounted to four hundred and eighty-four. The various Connexional Funds were considered to be in a healthful and flourishing condition, while it appeared that many friends had awoke to the importance and duty of making a better provision for the sustenance of their ministers. A meeting, therefore, of laymen was held in Donegal square chapel, with Thomas Farmer, Esq., in the chair, and it was resolved to recommend that each married minister should receive an allowance of at least £80 per annum, and each single minister £30. One sentiment, especially, in the Answer of the British Conference to the Irish Address—"Methodism rears no monuments where it saves no souls"—excited a most cordial response in the Conference and has become classic. The Rev. Samuel Young having intimated his intention of retiring from the office of Superintendent of Missions and Schools, received the thanks of the Conference for his services, and the Rev. Jesse Pilcher was subsequently appointed his successor. The Rev. Thomas T. N. Hull, who had laboured for about eight years as a foreign missionary, was warmly welcomed back to the scene of his former efforts; the Revs. William G. Campbell and Robert Hewitt were appointed general missionaries; and the Revs. Henry Price and George Vance were elected to accompany Mr. Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference.

The most important business, however, in connection with the meeting of the ministers in Belfast, was the inauguration of the Fund for the Increase of Wesleyan Agency in Ireland. This movement marked a new departure in the history of Irish Methodism, and developed, to an unprecedented extent, the ability, liberality, and godly zeal of Irish Methodist laymen. After mature deliberation by the Committee appointed in the previous year, it was resolved that a fund should be raised by means of which not only the basis of the Connexional School should be extended so as to afford education for a certain number of ministers' sons, but also that daily schools should be established, an educational institution should be erected, ministers' residences should be built where required, and the number of ministers increased. To make a start in carrying out this enlarged design, a breakfast-meeting was held in the Victoria Hall, on June 22nd, and was attended by the members of the Conference and the leading

Methodists of the kingdom. The President of the Conference took the chair, and earnest addresses were given by the Revs. Robinson Scott, Thomas Waugh, William Arthur, A.M., William Reilly, John Scott, and John Lomas, together with Messrs. Thomas A. Shillington, Archibald M'Elwain, Thomas Farmer, William and Alexander M'Arthur, James H. Swanton, Thomas Bennett, and others. It was easy to observe, in the course of the proceedings, that the true spirit of Christianity incited alike the speakers and the audience. Ministers and laymen together caught the holy flame which God's own Spirit kindled. All seemed to bow with holy gratitude before Him whose goodness they had richly tasted, and to feel their responsibility to God and His cause. It was the hope of those who proposed this scheme that £20,000 might be obtained, of which £5,000 might be raised in Ireland; but it was found at the conclusion of the meeting that the subscriptions then and there promised amounted to the noble sum of £8,821, which was afterwards largely increased. Letters of encouragement having been received from ministers of high station and influence in America, it was resolved, in order still further to promote the object contemplated, not only to bring the subject before the Methodists of Ireland, but also to send a deputation to the United States and Canada. Accordingly the Revs. Robinson Scott and William Arthur, having been thus appointed, left for the New World early in autumn. They were received with the utmost cordiality, every facility was afforded for promoting their mission, and the response to their appeal was most generous. The success of the whole scheme was very remarkable, as a marvellous impetus was given to education; in nineteen years the number of Wesleyan ministers in Ireland was increased fifty per cent., and their circumstances were greatly improved by the erection of a large number of residences, an addition to their incomes of at least one-half, and a provision made for the education of their sons.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference began its sittings in Dublin on June 27th. Mr. William Herbert was elected President, and Mr. Robert Kerr Secretary. Three candidates, including William Lovett of Belturbet and James Elliott, were admitted on trial. No death amongst the preachers had taken place during the year, but three had resigned their connection with the Conference to enter the ministry of Evangelical Churches. The

decrease in the membership was three hundred and forty-three. Mr. John Wherry took charge of a mission station, and Mr. Alexander Stewart succeeded him as editor of the Magazine, an office which he sustained for six years. It was resolved, "That in consequence of the altered state of the times, the salaries of preachers and missionaries be increased to £20 per annum."

The Wesleyan general missionaries went forth to their work in the name of the Lord Jesus, with many prayers for their preservation and success. They were everywhere aided by the zealous co-operation of the circuit ministers, and cheered by the welcome of friends, many of whom joyfully shared the inconveniencies often attendant on street preaching and open-air services. To record the regular and successive progress of these devoted brethren through the provinces is not necessary, yet the notice of a few facts may be desirable. At Kingstown the general missionaries were confronted by an infatuated rabble, whose determined interruption prevented the peaceful proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. Violence appeared imminent; but the Lord delivered His servants, and brought to their help brethren who took charge of the legal question and conducted it to a satisfactory issue.* The Rev. Robert Wallace having been grossly interfered with subsequently in conducting an open-air service in the town, instituted proceedings; the case was tried before Lord Chief Justice Monahan, and thus the right to conduct open-air services, provided there were no obstruction to the thoroughfare, was acknowledged by the Court of Queen's Bench.

On September 3rd the Rev. W. G. Campbell writes from Clones, "We had very gracious times on the Cootehill circuit, both in town and country; there were several happy conversions, and some instances of persons obtaining the blessing of perfect love. The street service was the most remarkable of all, quite in character with the one at Killashandra, and brothers Hazelton and Douglass wrought like men. They intend taking the streets, and going round the circuit together holding special services. I preached here twice in the streets. Yesterday the Fermanagh militia were in town and heard the word preached. Lord Enniskillen and a great number of others also were present in the market-house, and listened attentively. His lordship declared that if the missionary

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1856.

went with his regiment they would not have a sick man. I gave them books and tracts. At Cootehill the Romanists took the small Epistles with great avidity. I preached this morning in the street at seven o'clock, and many followed me to the house. We had a good time last night." At Corlisbrattan John E. Green was won for Christ. Again, a week later Mr. Campbell writes from Cavan, "On my way to Swanlinbar I took the street in Newtownbutler, and the after-meeting in the house was extraordinary. One man cried aloud. The street service in Clones on Monday was still more powerful. One man found peace with God. At Belturbet the congregation was very large, there were many penitents, and some obtained mercy and joined the Society. Two new classes were formed. On the following morning there was a remarkable service. One woman was made so happy that we thought she would never cease praising God. She literally danced for joy. In the evening the congregation exceeded any they had ever seen in the house before. Yesterday was a high day here. I took the street, after church, and had no interruption; the house was crowded in the evening, and several spoke who had heard in the street, and I hope will join the Society." On October 26th he writes from Londonderry, "At Lough Muck two Romanists appear to have been soundly converted, and others were in distress. It would not be easy to number those at Beragh, Omagh, etc., led to decision, but let God have all the glory. I preached yesterday in this city, and although the night was excessively wet, a grand congregation attended, and at the prayer-meeting afterwards there were many penitents." On November 9th he writes from Coleraine, "The work in this town justified Mr. Tobias in going to Ballymena for me, and it still goes on. This may indeed be regarded as almost miraculous, as in no place were there so many obstacles to be overcome, but by strong crying and tears they were removed. The leaders were not united, and some of them rather opposed to any special effort in connection with penitent meetings; but this prejudice has been overcome, and they are all alive. Seven or eight met last night and pledged themselves to work for God in every possible way. The work in the country parts also resulted blessedly in a number of happy conversions, and so it did at Newtownlimavady, where several leaders obtained purity of heart. Persons of other de-

nominations have been amongst the converts. The work in Derry goes on gloriously." *

Mr. Hewitt paid a visit to Bandon; a special revival tea-meeting was held in the school-room, Watergate place, and the Spirit of God descended at it in mighty power. About twenty or thirty responded to the invitation given to those anxious to come forward, and several realized peace and joy in believing. One of these was Mr. John W. Dawson,† who has since then rendered valuable service to the cause as a leader, local preacher, and circuit steward. It was about this time also that Thomas Lee was led to religious decision. He subsequently entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America.

It having been discovered that extensive repairs were necessary in Wesley chapel, Cork, the leading members of the Society resolved to celebrate the jubilee of its erection by getting these effected, and making such other improvements on the premises as were considered most desirable. These were completed at a cost of about £513, while one of the friends of the Society, though not a member, offered a liberal subscription to aid in providing stained glass for the windows, another had the organ painted and gilded at his own expense, and the ladies furnished rich velvet cushions and fringes, adding elegance to the dignity of the pulpit and reading-desk. The reopening service was conducted on Sunday, November 4th, when the Rev. Daniel Macafee preached from Leviticus xvii. 11, and the collections for the day amounted to £58 14*s*. On the following evening a public meeting was held. James H. Swanton, Esq., took the chair; the steward of the chapel read a statement of the finances, and the junior steward of the Society a brief history of Methodism in Cork, and eloquent addresses were delivered by the Revs. Dr. Appelbe and Daniel Macafee, as well as several others. The collection amounted to £51 3*s*. 10*d*., which, with what was subscribed both before and afterwards, met the entire outlay.

A few years previous to this a Scotchman, Mr. William Brown, had settled in Celbridge, and was thus for the first time brought under the influence of Methodism. He was led to religious decision through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Rev.

* Unpublished letters.

† Son of Mr. John Dawson of Mountpleasant.

Henry Geddes, but lost subsequently his sense of God's favour. However, having settled in Dublin and connected himself with the North circuit, he regained the evidence of his adoption on the first Sunday evening the Rev. Wallace M'Mullen preached in Abbey street chapel, on his appointment to that circuit. The text was Revelation iii. 20. From this time he held on his way, serving God and generously supporting His cause.

On Monday morning, November 5th, a public and outrageous act of sacrilege was committed at Kingstown, in the burning in the open street of the Sacred Scriptures, with the worst productions of infidelity and licentiousness. The Rev. Robert Wallace having heard of it, proceeded at once to the spot, and there, at the lower end of the Roman Catholic chapel, in sight of every one that passed by, he saw a large heap of cinders from books or paper, with patches of flame. A number of persons, one of them a boy in the dress of an acolyte, were round the fire, and kicked books, evidently Bibles, into the flames. One of these parties turned round and said, "We are burning Bibles. Have you any more to bring?" And then, to remove every doubt upon the subject, he took up a portion of one out of the fire, and handed it to Mr. Wallace. This fragment contained Deuteronomy iv. 12—17, which the Methodist minister selected as his text on the following Sunday morning. One of the Redemptorist fathers, Petcherine, was subsequently tried for the offence, and the jury considering the case not proved, acquitted him. Men, however, who acted such a part did much to prove how accurate is the motto *Semper eadem*, which is at once the boast and the brand of the system which they so meetly represented.

A very gracious religious awakening took place in connection with the Primitive Wesleyans at Ballyreagh, and like the similar work twelve years previously, commenced in the family of Mr. Robert Orr. He having taken seriously ill, his son Robert, then a young man of twenty-one, became seriously anxious about him, prayed earnestly for his recovery, and the Lord mercifully granted his request. He then resolved to enter upon a new life, went to class-meeting, where the power of God descended, and at a lovefeast held in Lisbellaw found peace in believing. A blessed work thus began which soon spread, and a large number were led to the Saviour. These included five brothers of Robert

Orr, two of whom, Thomas and James, as well as Robert, afterwards entered the itinerancy; William M'Cabe, a Romanist, and Christopher Wilson of Cavancarragh. The good work also extended to Ballinamallard and Knockmanoul, where "the overwhelming power of saving grace" appeared to overturn all opposition, and before the end of the year hundreds of souls were converted to God.*

The Revs. Robert Hamilton and Andrew Armstrong were appointed to Brookeborough, and were greatly cheered with tokens of the Lord's blessing. Mr. Armstrong commenced his labours animated by the hope of seeing sinners converted every week, if not every day; but this did not happen at first, and therefore he became greatly cast down, and thought he had made a mistake in entering the itinerancy. At length, in deep distress, he took the matter to his heavenly Father, and asked Him in mercy to decide it at the succeeding lovefeast at Tempo by giving him to see the conversion of souls if it were the Divine will that he should remain in the work, or by withholding this token if he should return home. At the close of the lovefeast the young preacher announced for a prayer-meeting, and proceeded to give an invitation to penitents to come forward; but before he could utter many sentences the people flocked up, and ere the meeting ended nine professed to have found the Saviour. This proved the beginning of a blessed and successful time.

On the Frederick street circuit, Belfast, the Rev. Robert Crook, A.B., did a very important work, more especially amongst the young people. The Bible-classes he formed were largely attended and exceedingly profitable, and in his theological class he drew around him a number of young men who subsequently occupied important positions of usefulness in different parts of the world and in various branches of the Christian Church. These included Samuel Mateer, who has done a noble work as a missionary of the London Society in Travancore; William Currie and Alexander Graham, who were received into the ministry of the Congregationalists; Edward Thomas, who joined the Methodist New Connexion; Thomas Freel, Alexander Fullerton, William A. Blake, and Charles H. Crookshank, who entered the Methodist itinerancy in Ireland; and not

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1857, p. 253.

less than twelve others, who became efficient leaders and local preachers.

The Revs. John Hughes and John Wilson were stationed on the Armagh circuit, where they did good work and were greatly assisted by James Oliver. One or two ministers of other denominations complained of the loss of some of their people, and preached and wrote against Methodism. This drew out Mr. Hughes, who published two able pamphlets, entitled "James Arminius; or, The Memory of the Just," and "The Ethics and Dogmas of Calvinism Contrary to the Character of God." Mr. Hughes also commenced to issue his tracts on the subject of ministerial support, which made such an impression, it is said, as to call forth a vote of censure from one Conference, and then from the following annual meeting of the ministers a vote of thanks, together with a grant towards the cost of publication.

The Rev. John S. M'Dade was sent to the Tanderagee circuit, where he had full houses everywhere in the country, and in Tanderagee and Gilford large congregations. But the cause at Banbridge was very low; there was no stopping-place for the preacher, and only an occasional week-evening service. Mr. M'Dade, however, collected a congregation of about thirty persons, and at the close of the service expressed his willingness to accept the hospitality of any of the friends present, but none offered to entertain him. On returning to the town an invitation was given by Miss Robinson, who said her sister-in-law had been present at the previous meeting, and came home weeping at there being no home for the preacher in Banbridge, nor would she be comforted until she obtained a promise that it would be given to him. Thus the way was opened for regular visits, until the people desired Sabbath services, and Mr. M'Dade reopened the chapel. On that day at least one soul was won for Christ; and soon additional stopping-places were opened, so that the people were enabled to offer £30 per annum towards the support of a third minister.

One Sunday afternoon, as Mr. M'Dade took his stand under the shade of a tree at the end of Gilford, and began to preach to a large crowd, he observed a young man, with pale and haggard look, listening with anxious interest, and invited him to the evening service in the chapel. The invitation was accepted, and

the poor fellow, who had been wont to spend his Sabbaths in the fields with his dog, and his wages on drink, found mercy at the foot of the Cross. His wife was delighted at the marvellous change in her husband, and taught him to read that he might study the Bible for himself. At class when the members paid their quarterage Robert inquired what it was for, and offered to pay also. The leader, however, refused to accept anything; but the young convert insisted on being allowed to contribute, saying that he had spent much in the devil's service, and got nothing but misery in return, but now he had a happy heart and home, and many comforts to which he and his family had been strangers, and therefore would make some return. He continues faithful to this day, and is greatly respected in the neighbourhood where he lives.

At Tanderagee there was a family, nominally connected with Methodism, the parents of which maintained that people sinned not from nature, but from example, and they tried to support their opinion by referring to the life of their son. Mr. M'Dade, however, spoke to this moral youth about the state of his heart, and he admitted that he was a sinner by nature and practice, and earnestly desired to be converted. Thus the young man whom his friends thought had no sin was led to the Great Sin-bearer, and entered upon a course of much usefulness, especially as a leader, first in his own neighbourhood, and then in connection with Donegal square chapel, Belfast.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1856.

Few men in modern Methodism have been so well known in Ireland, and so much admired, as William Morley Punshon. His manly form, beaming countenance, and glowing eloquence were familiar in all quarters. When some faint rumours concerning his popularity first reached this land, and it was proposed at a leaders' meeting in Belfast South that he should be invited to the town, it was gravely said, "It would never do to bring to Ireland a man with such a name," and the proposal was rejected. Early in 1855, however, the Rev. Robert G. Jones, who was in the North circuit, and wished to secure the assistance of a popular preacher, requested the Rev. William Arthur to come to his help; but he could not, and suggested that it would be well to get a young man from Sheffield, called Punshon. The hint was taken, and the distinguished orator preached in the Frederick street chapel for the first time on this side of the Channel, selecting for his text Revelation viii. 3. He also occupied the same pulpit again that day and on the following evening, and the favourable impression made was deep and wide-spread.

Mr. Punshon appeared for the first time in Ireland as a lecturer on January 21st, 1856, and at once rose to a position of amazing and life-long popularity. The largest halls were crowded to hear him, and the people were delighted, thrilled, and enraptured. They laughed, and wept, and cheered by turns. It was not the emotional mass merely that was thus affected, but also the phlegmatic, the cool-headed, and the cultured. In this instance the Victoria Hall, Belfast, was the scene of his triumph. On the platform were some of the leading divines and collegiate professors in the kingdom. The house was crowded, and the subject of the lecture was "Science and Literature in Relation to

Religion." As the young orator proceeded the spell of his matchless eloquence rested on the audience, and professors, philosophers, and divines were as enthusiastic in their plaudits as the shop assistants and apprentice boys. Even the staid and stately Dr. Cooke was so entranced that, unconscious to himself, the bow of his cambric cravat passed round to the back of his neck, a fact to which he only awoke when subsequently speaking to a vote of thanks, and then, in trying to adjust it, and humorously quoting from the lecture, said, "Mr. Chairman, I perceive my cravat has revolved upon its axis!" while Dr. Edgar playfully remarked, "If every *puncheon* were as sweet as that of which we have just partaken I fear my pledge would run a bad chance of being kept."

Mr. Punshon paid his first visit to the metropolis in the following August, in response to an invitation from the Dublin North circuit. He was the guest of Mr. Deaker, preached in Abbey street chapel to a crowded house, and made a most powerful impression. "His sermon," it is said, "had much of the fire, force, and finish of his maturer years; and some of those who hung on his lips that day often in after-years referred to his memorable ministration of the word of life on this occasion." *

One evening a young man whose intelligent and melancholy countenance betrayed an unsettled and anxious mind was accosted by a Christian lady and invited to the Abbey street chapel. He accepted the invitation, and was then told that a class for young men met upstairs on Sunday mornings, and asked if he would go to it. At the time of meeting he went, and seeing a gentleman there, inquired, "Do you know Mr. Henshaw?" "Yes," replied the other, "I am Mr. Henshaw; what can I do for you?" "I want salvation, sir." "Then come with me." The youth did so, entered the class-room, and told the members what he desired. All knelt down and prayed together, and soon the anxious inquirer found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. That young man was Charles C. Rorke, a native of Ballinasloe, who had been pursuing a wild and wayward course, but was arrested by the solemn warnings and triumphant death of a dearly loved brother. The young convert then entered upon a brief but remarkably earnest and successful career. Having removed to Manchester,

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1881, p. 751.

and been greatly quickened there, he joined a prayer-leaders' band, visited some of the lanes and back streets of the city, and addressing himself to a number of his fellow-countrymen, succeeded in gathering many of them to hear the Gospel. The Lord began to work among them by His Spirit, and thus a gracious revival commenced. It was soon discovered that Rorke possessed gifts of no common order, and that he ought to exercise them more publicly than he had done. Accordingly his name was put upon the local preachers' plan, by which means he became more extensively known and much more useful. Having laboured in this capacity for some time, he was proposed and accepted as a candidate for the ministry, and sent to the Theological Institution at Richmond, where he remained for three years. The labours and success of this period cannot be chronicled, for he was admitted by his fellow-students to have "laboured more abundantly than they all," and tidings were borne from each of his services of the salvation of souls. While successful as a revivalist in the country places, he felt there was special need of concentrating his work in the town of Richmond. Here, therefore, he formed a new congregation, and preached from week to week, and his labours were so Divinely owned that at the end of his collegiate course it was deemed advisable to retain him as a home missionary. The high estimate formed of him by his ministerial brethren may be inferred from the following extract from his obituary record: "His earnest spirit did not wait to have work laid out for him, but he made opportunities for himself. His voice was often heard in the highways, beseeching men to be reconciled to God. He had a powerful and abiding conviction of the value of souls, and would toil unweariedly in search of even one 'lost sheep,' frequently bringing it to the fold rejoicing. No second thought seemed to possess his mind; the salvation of men was the topic of conversation wherever he was, and his very face would shine while he told of his having 'seen hundreds of sinners seeking the Saviour.' His preaching was attractive and powerful, and his appeals to the conscience were eminently successful. In visiting from house to house he was indefatigable, and by this means he brought many within the range of his influence for good. Traces of usefulness are visible in every place where he laboured, and many will be 'the crown of his rejoicing' in the day of the Lord.

He died very suddenly, soon after preaching, and people mourned for him 'with a great and very sore lamentation.'" *

A few glimpses are given of the earnest and successful labours of the general missionaries. At Cookstown, through the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. Campbell, Messrs. Hugh M'Gahie and Charles Wilson, with others, were won for Christ. On the Tanderagee circuit "there were large congregations and conversions at every place visited by Mr. Hewitt. New places also were opened for preaching, a large increase took place in the number of members, and the classes generally were much revived." At Rathfryland, Samuel Weir, who had been converted three years previously, but lost his assurance of the Divine favour, was restored to the joys of God's salvation. At Newtownbarry the meetings were full of life, and Mr. Hewitt, with great tact, earnestness, and success, endeavoured to lead sinners to the Saviour.

From Donegal the Rev. John Feely writes, "During the year we have been enabled to open our beautiful new chapel in Dunkineely. The weather proved favourable, although it was winter; the attendance was numerous and respectable, and the response to the appeal of the preacher good. It was a time of sacred joy to our people, and many others seemed to participate in it. Since the opening services, the ministry of the word of life seems more than ever appreciated by the people, who esteem it a great privilege to assemble for Divine worship in this commodious building. Our chapel in Ardara was fast falling into ruin, but is now being repaired, and will soon be ready for reopening. These are tokens of the good hand of our God upon us, and yet we have better proofs than these. Early in the year several persons professed to have found peace with God through faith in Christ; and recently we have been again cheered by the conversion of others, some of whom had been strangers to us, and they have seen it to be their duty and privilege to unite themselves with our section of the Church. Some Roman Catholics have heard the truth occasionally, chiefly at funerals and field-meetings, and many would hear were they not afraid." †

Mr. James Wilson was appointed by the Primitive Wesleyan Conference to the Charlemont circuit, where a meeting of the

* Minutes of the British Conference, 1870, p. 35.

† *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1856.

preachers, stewards, and leaders was held, and a series of resolutions passed, by which those present pledged themselves to increased effort, prayer, and fidelity in the use of the public means of grace, as well as to abstain from all intoxicating drinks, except when necessary as a medicine; and they were not long without manifestations of the Divine approval. At the following quarterly meeting at Dungannon the Spirit of the Lord descended in mighty power, cries for mercy were heard in every part of the house, and many obtained a sense of God's forgiving love. At the meeting in Moy, which followed, similar cheering results were witnessed. Special services were then held in different parts of the circuit, and they were greatly owned of God. Thus the good work deepened and spread, and the preachers, as the year closed, had the joy of returning a good increase in the membership.*

The Conference of the Primitive Wesleyans began its forty-first annual meeting in Dublin on June 23rd. Dr. Heather was elected President, and Mr. John White Secretary. Three candidates, including John C. Ramsey of Dublin, were received on trial, and no death was recorded as having occurred amongst the preachers during the year. The returns from the several stations showed a considerable augmentation of numbers; for after filling up all vacancies occasioned by emigration, death, and religious declension, there was an increase of seven hundred and twenty-two members, about a thousand souls having been converted within the twelve months. The Connexional funds stood well, and there appeared in every department of the Society's affairs cheering prospects of continuous and extending prosperity.

The Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on June 24th, under the presidency of the Rev. Isaac Keeling, who was accompanied by the Revs. John Farrar and William Arthur, A.M. Eight candidates were received on trial. These included Irvine Johnston of Dooish, on the Castlederg circuit, George Kirkpatrick of Moysnaght, Tempo, Edward, son of the Rev. William Guard, James B. Atkins, and James Oliver. Five ministerial brethren had died during the year—Samuel M'Dowell of Belfast, Henry M. Beale, A.B., and Joshua Harman of Dublin, John Jebb of Londonderry, and George Grant of Limerick—and each passed away with a glorious hope of a blessed immortality. The reports as to the state of the work were

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1857, pp. 116-18.

most cheering. Conversions to God and additions to the Societies had taken place on some circuits, which had they been general, would have rivalled the most prosperous periods of the history of the Church in this land, so that notwithstanding a loss by emigration of four hundred and sixty members, there was a net increase of two hundred and three. This was a small addition, yet coming as it did after eleven successive years of diminution, it was received with devout gratitude as a token that the long night of weeping had passed away, and a day of hope and joy had dawned. The report of the Committee for the Increase of Wesleyan Agency was also very encouraging. The movement commenced so vigorously at the previous Conference had been prosecuted with such gratifying success that subscriptions had been given in this country to the amount of £14,000, nearly three times the sum originally expected. The Revs. Robinson Scott and William Arthur, A.M., the American deputation, stated that they had met with a most cordial reception from their Transatlantic brethren, many of whom had entered most heartily into the project, so that nearly £9,000 was promised. The presence of Mr. Arthur at the Conference was a special source of devout gratitude. A dangerous illness with which he had been seized, some time after his arrival in America, had awakened in this country the deepest concern, and fervent prayer was offered for his recovery. When, therefore, his Irish brethren saw him among them fully restored, and heard from his own lips of the steadfastness of those who had left their homes, and of their kindly remembrance, not only of their native land, but also of the Church by means of which they were converted, they thanked God and took courage. The Rev. William Reilly was appointed to accompany the Rev. Robinson Scott to America, and complete the work thus begun. Although the former was seventy-five years of age, he prosecuted the object of his mission with wonderful energy, until the widespread financial panic which came upon the country rendered further effort inexpedient. During his stay he attended nearly twenty annual Conferences, and preached in the charges belonging to many of them, advocating the cause of Irish Methodism, and presenting what he believed to be the true remedy for the maladies of Ireland. On some days he travelled on foot seven or eight miles, preaching three times, delivering three several addresses, and making as

many collections. Yet he was not, during the entire time, one hour without the full enjoyment of health. At one of the Conferences the venerable Dr. Charles Elliott kindly laid his hand upon his shoulder and said, "Brother Reilly, I am proud on your account; I am tall, as Americans say: you are never sick, you are never tired, you are never angry, you never complain. I am proud of you after a godly sort." *

The Rev. James Collier was appointed to the Boyle circuit, on which he says the people were the kindest that he had ever met with. Messrs. Mark Crawford and John Laird—son-in-law and son of Glover Laird, Carrick-on-Shannon,† and thus Methodists of the third generation—were the pillars of the cause, and their relatives were all over the circuit and heartily identified with the Society. At Castlereagh the ministers were entertained by Mrs. Cotton, sister of the Rev. William Cornwall, and her husband, who kept the lamp of the Lord burning in this dark neighbourhood.

On August 12th the Rev. William G. Campbell writes, "The Lord Jesus has given me six new openings since Conference, and if I called Arvagh one I could say seven. I preached in the old Roman Catholic chapel of that town to at least one hundred and fifty people, and saw about forty penitents crying for mercy. The day at Corlisbrattan was an extraordinary one. Last Sabbath the field-meeting was to have been held at Ballyjamesduff, but we had to go to the house. Yesterday I came to Virginia, in order to get a footing, if possible; and although it was dark as midnight, the Lord caused the light to break forth in obscurity. I preached to twenty adults, and published for to-night, when I hope to have a larger number." On October 7th he writes, "The Lord has remarkably poured out His Spirit on Ballymote and Collooney. Mr. Cooper gave me the large market-house last Sabbath, and it was filled to overflowing, and also last night. I shall not mention numbers, but the professions were many."‡

On the 30th Mrs. Whittaker of Sligo writes, "We have had quite a shaking of the dry bones here of late. Many have been awakened to conviction of sin, some backsliders recalled, and some brought to a knowledge of the truth. The instrumentality is Mr. Campbell, an Irish missionary, who appears to have inexhaustible strength, for night after night his meetings are carried

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1869, p. 1. † *Vide* ii., p. 117. ‡ Unpublished letters.

on for hours, when all the energies of mind and body appear fully on the stretch." *

The Revs. Samuel Johnston and James Oliver were appointed to Lowtherstown, and in nearly every place they visited on their circuit had the joy of seeing souls brought to God. Amongst those thus won for Christ were William J. Robinson, now of Londonderry, John W. Jones, who entered the itinerancy, and William Porter, who became a most laborious and acceptable local preacher. The lovefeasts, especially at Lowtherstown, were generally times of great power and blessing, so that they sometimes continued for six or seven hours, and were brought to a close with difficulty; but often not before twenty or thirty were led to the foot of the Cross. Open-air services also were frequently held, large numbers attended them, and many outside the pale of Methodism were in this way reached. Thus at the end of the year there was a net increase in the membership of one hundred. Notwithstanding these successes, however, the good work was more or less interfered with by the tippling habits of some of the members, upon whom discipline had to be exercised; by the very low standard of giving acted upon by many more, although their hospitality was of the most generous and lavish character; and also by a servile attachment to and connection with the Established Church.

The Rev. John Wilson was appointed to Belfast South, with the Revs. Robert G. Jones and James B. Gillman, and says that, with the assistance of Mr. John Caruth and others, he held a weekly prayer-meeting in the Fall's road chapel, at which many souls were converted. He was also in the pulpit of this building when it was surrounded by a mob, that broke the large plate-glass windows and otherwise injured the house, while he himself escaped by the interference of a publican. Yet Mr. Wilson preached in the open air in almost every street, from Wesley place to Fall's road; hundreds of Roman Catholics, as well as Protestants, listened, and he did not receive the slightest annoyance.

The Primitive Wesleyan chapel in High street, Holywood, was offered by Mr. John White to the Wesleyans for sale, and thus passed into the hands of the Society on the Donegal square circuit.

On the Carrickfergus circuit, where the Revs. Thomas Ballard

* A Tribute to the Memory of Mrs. Whittaker, p. 60.

and Colin M'Kay were stationed, there was a very blessed revival, more especially in the neighbourhood of Larne. Amongst others converted were a number of young men, who have rendered exceedingly valuable service to the cause of Christ. These included John W. A. Macwilliam and Robert Boyd, who afterwards entered the itinerancy, together with Mr. John A. Bowman, who also has been engaged in earnest and successful Christian work. To this devoted youthful band may be added the name of Thomas Knox of Ballygowan, who about three years previously, in his father's house, realized peace in believing, and has proved a faithful and laborious minister of the Gospel.

The Rev. Robert G. Cather, A.M., was appointed to take charge of the Coleraine circuit, and entered into his work with the energy and ardour for which he was so remarkable. Soon a marked improvement took place, the congregations greatly increased, and a very gracious work commenced among the members. Not satisfied with these tokens of success, Mr. Cather determined to make aggression on the mass of people living in ignorance and sin. A town mission was projected, a suitable brother appointed as a missionary, and a school started at Killowen. This soon developed into a ragged-school, which commended itself to public sympathy, so that subscriptions were freely given for its support. In connection with this excellent institution there was a good Band of Hope, and also a penny savings' bank. Subsequently this work was taken up by a committee, consisting of members of different Evangelical Churches, and by their influence the excellent premises now in use were erected. Most interesting and successful evangelistic services were held in rooms, rented and fitted up for the purpose, in Killowen and Long Commons, and sometimes as many as one hundred persons attended them.

The reports from the circuits and mission-stations of the Primitive Wesleyans were encouraging. Messrs. John and John C. Ramsey, who were appointed to Longford and Roscommon, say, "We commenced our labours immediately after Conference, and from that period to the present have been uninterruptedly employed in preaching, visiting, holding prayer-meetings, and tract-distributing, and, with thankfulness to God, are enabled to report that 'we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.' In some of the remote and mountainous districts of our field of

labour there are numerous families of poor Protestants who hail with delight our monthly visits. We are the only ministers of Christ who seem to care for their souls. With us they gladly share their homely fare, and from us they joyfully receive the glad tidings of salvation. Very frequently numbers of persons flock into their cabins, and amongst them not a few Romanists, to hear the word of God. The congregations generally are impressed; several members have been added to the Society, some of whom, we believe, are hopefully converted to God, and others are 'inquiring their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward.' The great mass of the people, however, in this country are totally destitute of the life and power of godliness, and are living 'without God, and without hope in the world.' There are many Protestants as ignorant of the Gospel and as destitute of religion as the unenlightened Romanists, who are denied access to the sacred volume."

Maguiresbridge had in the previous year been favoured with an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the Lord continued to carry on the blessed work. Mr. John Todd writes, "God has been going through the circuit as a mighty conqueror. Many have been subdued under His word; old and young have yielded to be saved by grace. Frequently persons come six or seven miles to our lovefeasts, and many have had to go away for want of room, while others, who could not get inside, stood about the windows. At some of these meetings the cry for pardon would rend the stoutest heart—indeed, it was so great that it seemed as if those who uttered it felt that they were on the brink of hell; but in most cases sorrow was soon turned into joy. I saw parents in the arms of their children, and children in the arms of their parents, rejoicing together in God. Last year upwards of three hundred and fifty members were added to the Society. Since Conference we have had some glorious meetings. Still, notwithstanding the success with which it pleased the Lord to crown our feeble efforts, we had to deplore that parts of the circuit remained hard and unyielding; but some of these have lately been broken down, and many persons at them have given themselves to God. In one of these places twenty came forward as penitents seeking mercy. At our last quarterly meeting in Fivemiletown there were about thirty anxious inquirers, many of

whom returned home rejoicing in the Lord. At Pubble we had much of the presence and power of God; the people spoke freely, and at the close about twenty penitents came forward. We have seventy-eight classes on this circuit, and the same number of leaders, men of God, who, with few exceptions, are willing to make great sacrifices to assist in carrying on the work. Frequently they leave their homes, travel miles to meet the preacher, and then assist at the services. Some of them, on Sunday mornings, after having met their classes, go through their respective neighbourhoods, bring the unconverted inhabitants together, and by exhortation and prayer endeavour to lead them to the Saviour. We have also band-meetings, chiefly of young men whom the Lord has raised up as helpers, so that when the aged are obliged to quit the field these young persons will be ready to supply their places."

Concerning Lowtherstown Mr. John Ker reports, "The cause of God seems to flourish on this circuit ever since the Conference. The congregations are generally very large, and much good has been done. Many have been brought to inquire what they must do to be saved. On the fair-day at Pettigo in July I preached in the street to thousands, including hundreds of Roman Catholic pilgrims to Lough Derg; all listened with the greatest attention, and many said that I told nothing but the truth. The following fair-day I took my stand near the market-house, gave out the hymn beginning 'Jesus the name high over all,' had at least a thousand hearers, and while I proclaimed a free, full, and present salvation to Romanists and Protestants, all heard with deep attention, and I heard the cry of penitents seeking for redemption through the blood of Christ. We have abundant cause of thankfulness to the Great Head of the Church for the manifestations of His power and mercy with which we are favoured. Our quarterly meetings were indeed 'times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' At Lowtherstown the congregation was much larger than on any preceding occasion for many years, and the people spoke with great freedom. At the concluding prayer-meeting an invitation was given to those who felt their need of pardon to come forward; and many responded, almost all of whom found peace with God. Our meeting at Pettigo was a memorable one; the house was crowded, and to persons unaccustomed to

revival scenes the service would have appeared noisy; but it was the noise of broken-hearted sinners groaning for deliverance, and of rejoicing believers as they laid hold on Christ for salvation. Many who went to the meeting heavy laden had their burden removed, and returned home praising God. Numbers throughout the circuit have tasted the sweets of forgiving love, some in public, others in private, and several in the retirement of the closet." Mr. Robert Kane adds, "We held our quarterly meeting in Fintona, on the same day as that in Pettigo, and we also had a crowded house and much of the presence of the Lord. The freedom with which the people spoke was indeed cheering and profitable. The prayer-meeting with which we concluded was greatly acknowledged of the Lord, and some of the penitents professed to have received 'the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.' It was said to be the best meeting except one that had been in Fintona for six years. Upon the whole, this circuit is greatly revived."

Mr. Alexander Campbell of Lurgan says, "We have had the advantage this year of entering on the labours of valuable brethren who lately filled this station. At the close of last year the Spirit of God influenced some hearts. Others since then have submitted to the Lord and found mercy. Some new members have been added to the Society, and the congregations in several places are considerably enlarged, but in others they continue small. Our leaders in general are useful, and some of them are in the habit of going through a round of labour on the Sabbath involving considerable bodily fatigue. At our quarterly meeting in this town, in addition to a good attendance and an encouraging relation of Christian experience, the prayer-meeting at the close was very good. Nearly thirty persons presented themselves as anxious seekers of mercy, and many of them were enabled to rejoice in the forgiveness of sins. We have lately got possession of a valuable preaching-house in this town, erected by the Methodist New Connexion, to which we purpose removing our services shortly." This building was purchased for £340, and upwards of £100 in addition was expended in painting and otherwise improving it. The reopening services were conducted by Dr. Heather and Mr. John White, who preached to crowded congregations.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1857.

On January 13th, 1857, the Rev. William G. Campbell writes from Enniskillen, "The work in Donegal, Sligo, Ballyshannon, and Manorhamilton justifies a return visit. The three last I have revisited with profit. The work in them, as well as in this town, is deep and likely to last. Here it is even more powerful than last year. I have now to assist brother Johnston of Lowtherstown, who had his shoulder dislocated by a fall from his gig, then I go to Donegal, where the work is marvellous, even among Romanists." *

The Society in Sligo sustained no ordinary loss in the removal by death of its most zealous and devoted member, Mrs. Whittaker. She had often expressed a wish that she might "cease at once to work and live," and said she would have no objection to lie down to sleep and awake in eternity. On June 15th she visited several friends, collecting subscriptions for the missions, and rejoicing in the goodness of God in enabling her to exceed former amounts collected; "for well she knew," she said, "that her gracious Master would never forsake her." Thus the very last day she spent on earth found her in all the activities of life—visiting the sick and attending to each customary duty. In the evening she attended public service, afterwards met one of her classes, prayed with a friend in her own apartment, and then, apparently in perfect health and in a peculiarly happy frame of mind, retired to rest, and awoke in eternity. On the following morning she was found as if in a placid sleep, with a sweet smile on her countenance, and so little of death in the expression that her maid felt unwilling to disturb her. Having walked with God faithfully and conscientiously for more than forty years, she was not, for God took her.

* Unpublished letter.

From the annual reports of the Wesleyan missionaries the following extracts are worthy of record. The Rev. Henry Geddes of Lucan and Trim says, "In nearly every part of this mission the Gospel is listened to with attention, and in some places it has proved the power of God unto salvation. The members of the Society in general give evidence that they are growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The new chapel at Trim was opened for Divine worship on May 14th, when the Rev. T. T. N. Hull preached, and a large congregation listened with deep interest, and responded liberally to the appeal of the preacher."

From Connemara the Rev. William B. Le Bert writes, "Although the accessible population is very limited, we are able, nevertheless, to reach a few, to whom the word of life is ministered with cheering results. In Clifden we have now an interesting cause, there being a nice congregation, a Society formed into two classes, a Sunday-school, and regular Sabbath and week-day services; but a chapel is much needed. Notwithstanding obloquy, contempt, and exclusive dealing, our members have stood unmoved, trusting in the care of their heavenly Father." The Rev. Robert Bell, who was appointed to Westport, states, "Two new classes have just been formed—one in Newport, and the other in the island of Achill. The failure and consequent withdrawal of the Irish Church missions from this entire district seems to have more fully confirmed Romanists in their own prejudices and in their contempt for all Protestant Evangelical labours. There are, at the same time, some gratifying exceptions; individuals are met who listen with marked attention and deep feeling when addressed on the saving truths of the Gospel. The arrangements for the erection of a new chapel at Newport have been carried out. By a vigorous and united effort, this neat and substantial edifice, situated within a few yards of the house where the Rev. William Arthur spent his boyhood, was completed in April, and immediately afterwards opened for Divine worship under encouraging circumstances."

In Donegal the Rev. Edward Best found a people prepared of the Lord, and during the first round of the mission made by himself and his colleague, the Rev. James Edwards, the Lord poured out His Spirit as a prelude of subsequent showers of blessing. Twenty-two persons in one place, and a few in some

others, professed to have obtained peace with God. The congregations increased so rapidly that in most of the country places and two of the chapels the audiences were oppressively large; nor could dark night or long and perilous journeys over mountains, moors, and rivers prevent the people from flocking to hear the word of life, although often obliged to stand around the doors and windows during service. Many of these meetings lasted six or eight hours, and on a few special occasions the most of the night was spent weeping with those who wept and rejoicing with those who rejoiced. The leaders and people gave themselves afresh to the Lord and His service, and co-operated heartily in the blessed work. Persons who had been invited from a distance to the services returned to their homes and told what great things the Lord had done for them. Great excitement prevailed in some districts amongst the Romanists, four of whom were savingly converted, and a fifth, who had professed conversion, was compelled to yield to the intolerance of the priest and his friends. Some lingered around the doors and windows, and were kept from openly avowing the convictions they felt by the terror which prevailed among them. The chapel at Ardara having been reopened, a gallery had to be erected to accommodate the increased congregations, and even the new house at Dunkineely proved altogether unequal to the demands for accommodation in it.

The senior general missionary, the Rev. William G. Campbell, in his report, says, "In July and August I visited the province of Leinster, and in September and October Connaught. In some parts of the Boyle and Sligo circuits, especially Ballyfarnan, Ballymote, Collooney, and the barony of Leyny, the new openings and tokens of the Lord's presence were equal to any I have seen in Ireland. The same may be said of Donegal, Lowtherstown, Churchhill, and Cavan, in each of which it has been my happiness to see sinners converted to God. The labours of the year have been on twenty circuits and missions; between four and five hundred sermons have been preached, and many other meetings held; thousands of tracts and books have been distributed, as well as numerous copies of the Holy Scriptures. In general the Government has afforded your missionary the protection of the law, and on one occasion of special interest a strong force of

police attended and preserved the peace while he preached. In some places no such protection can be relied on." The second general missionary, the Rev. Robert Hewitt, writes, "During the year I have visited thirty-five circuits and missions, and on each, with only one exception, have seen souls savingly converted. I have travelled about four thousand one hundred miles, and preached three hundred and twenty-five times, besides holding other services and distributing about five thousand tracts and copies of the Scriptures. I have seen a great number of persons who profess to have been awakened and converted by the preaching of the word, while thousands have listened, in fairs, markets, fields, houses, and other places, to that Gospel truth which they would not otherwise have heard. I have observed many people, in the open street, weep under the word, and some fall down on their knees to plead for God's pardoning mercy." *

The good work in connection with the labours of the Primitive Wesleyans on the Maguiresbridge circuit continued. Mr. Todd writes, "We have had very blessed quarterly meetings. In Fivemiletown the house was crowded; many were unable to get in, and about twenty were enabled to rejoice in a sin-pardoning God. At Pubble we had a good attendance, and fifteen professed to have been set at liberty. In Maguiresbridge there were over twenty penitents, and most of them found mercy. At Lisbellaw we had a blessed time, and sixteen souls were hopefully converted. So great was the distress of the penitents that their cries could be heard afar; but their sorrow was soon turned into joy. A daughter of one of our leaders was amongst those who were made happy in God; but her sister, who was present, seemed to resist the Holy Spirit. After the close of the meeting, I, with others, went to this brother's house, and when tea was over requested all present to sit down, and each one to say in turn, 'My Jesus!' Some joyfully repeated the words; but others could not, and felt it. Many wept, and three, including the girl who had appeared so hardened, cried aloud for mercy. Prayer was offered on their behalf, and not in vain; for after long wrestling the poor penitents were filled with peace and joy in believing. Thus father, mother, and children all united in praising God." †

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1857.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1857, p. 120.

Considerable interest was attached to the erection of a school-house at Glackadrumman, Inishowen. This building, which afforded accommodation for about two hundred persons, together with rooms for the teacher, was built chiefly through the exertions of Mr. William Flaherty, at a cost of about £167, and was opened early in June, in connection with a tea-meeting. Those present, including a considerable number from Londonderry, filled the room, and several appropriate addresses were delivered. A Presbyterian congregation at Stirling generously promised to contribute £30 annually towards the support of the teacher.*

On June 24th the Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced its sessions in Dublin. Mr. William Craig was elected President, and Mr. Robert Kerr Secretary. Five candidates were received on trial, including William Conlin of the Athlone circuit, Alexander M'Cormack, and John M'Cappin; and one of the supernumerary brethren, James G. Brown of Newtownbutler, was reported as having died. For several years he had been paralyzed, yet continued to preach the Gospel with power and acceptance, having to be carried to and from the house of God. As to the state of the work in general, it is said in the Pastoral Address, "After a careful and searching review, we are bound to state that while there are discouraging circumstances in connection with some of our circuits and missions, there is blessed evidence that our Society is not only in a healthy, but a prosperous and improving condition. The extensive religious awakenings which so greatly cheered us this time twelve months have steadily progressed during the year, while other fields have received a blessed baptism of the Divine Spirit, so that many sinners have been converted to God." After filling up vacancies, the increase in the membership amounted to one hundred and seventy-nine. An improvement also took place in the provision for the support and comfort of ministers, for it was resolved that owing to the great advance which had taken place in the price of provisions, the annual allowance to preachers' wives should be increased from £16 to £20; that a committee should consider what additional assistance could be given to superannuated preachers and preachers' widows; and that a room should be provided for the accommodation of each of the unmarried preachers;

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1857, pp. 307-9.

while in reference to the increased use of intoxicating drinks the following resolution was passed: "That the members of the Conference having heard the principles of the United Kingdom Alliance for the Suppression of the Liquor Traffic explained, express their entire sympathy with the movement, and pledge themselves to use their influence to promote it."

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Cork, the preparatory committees beginning on June 17th, and the Conference on the 25th. The Rev. Robert Young presided, and he was accompanied by the Revs. Isaac Keeling and Dr. Hannah, a deputation to Ireland from the American Episcopal Church, consisting of Bishop Simpson and the Rev. Dr. M'Clintock, was introduced, and it is an interesting coincidence that on receiving these honoured brethren the Conference was assembled in the city where the remains of one of the first Methodist missionaries sent to America rest until the morning of the resurrection. Four candidates, including George Barnes of Lurgan and William H. Quarry, were received on trial, while three aged ministers, Edward Cobain of Belfast, Robert Crozier of Enniskillen, and George M'Elwain of Blackrock, were reported as having died during the year, and each ended his days rejoicing in the prospect of a glorious immortality. Mr. Crozier lived to the unusual age of ninety-two years, and preached the evening before he died. "Mind," said he that day to a friend, "God will revive His work at home and abroad. He will make Methodism a greater blessing than it has ever been. Look at it rising, phœnix-like, from the fire, and spreading its pinions for a wider and higher flight."

Although the tide of emigration had carried away nearly five hundred members, there was a net increase of three hundred and twenty-five. In the Address to the British Conference it is said, "There are few parts of the kingdom which have not had tokens for good, while in some the Spirit has been largely poured from on high. On the Enniskillen district and Donegal mission—places which suffered much in the recent vicissitudes of Ireland, and in which many faithful servants of the Lord toiled and wept and prayed—have been realized the beautiful description of the prophet, 'The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and

instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign which shall not be cut off.' These 'showers of blessing' have been vouchsafed to the labours of the faithful men who were stationed in those localities and to the visits of our general missionaries. The latter instrumentality has been greatly owned of God during the year. In most parts of the country, in markets and fairs, in streets and lanes, as well as in our ordinary places of worship, the brethren set apart for this work have preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to attentive congregations, and many have turned to the Lord. In no single year, for a long period, were we able to report so many conversions from Romanism—conversions not merely from one system to another, but conversions in which the subjects of the change, after hearing the truth as it is in Jesus, 'first gave themselves unto the Lord, and then unto us by the will of God.'"

While thus the reports from the circuits and missions were, in general, indicative of healthful spiritual prosperity, it was cheering to observe a steadily increasing interest in the financial concerns of the Church. This was evident not only in enlarged Connexional funds, but in the improvements adopted with reference to ministerial support. Perhaps there was not a body of Christian ministers on earth who could say to the people of their charge, "We seek not yours, but you," with greater emphasis than the Irish Wesleyan ministers. Those of them who had personal property had freely consecrated it to the support of the cause to which they had given themselves, and those who had none had laboured on amid privations which many would think scarcely credible. Now and then a laborious and successful minister was forced by the pressure of poverty into premature retirement, yet few inquired how far the Church had obeyed the ordinance of God that "they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." But the dawn of a better day now appeared. Earnest men took up the subject, and showed that it was a vital one, while several circuits adopted a greatly improved scale of ministerial allowance. This was apparent, as it was found that a number of circuits had adopted the recommendation of the Belfast Committee with regard to the minimum allowance to ministers; others were taking steps towards a similar arrangement, and the allowance to the children of ministers, for maintenance and

education, was extended from fourteen years of age to sixteen. The Revs. Daniel Macafee and Gibson M'Millen were elected to accompany Mr. Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference. The public services held in Cork and the neighbourhood were distinguished by grace and power, while the magnificent and powerful sermon preached by Bishop Simpson from 1 John v. 4 can never be forgotten by those who had the privilege to hear it.

Owing to the great success which attended the work in the county of Donegal, a third minister was appointed to the mission, so that the Rev. Edward Best had now for his colleagues the Revs. John Wilson, who resided at Dunkineely, and William H. Quarry, whose headquarters were at Ardara. The missionaries write, "It is our privilege to record our gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for the very marked prosperity with which He has blessed us. We rejoice to say that, of the hundreds converted last year, very few have left their first love. In places formerly discouraging we have been cheered by very large congregations and many remarkable conversions. The appointment of a third minister has been a great blessing, and has enabled us to give regular Sabbath services to our principal congregations. It is delightful to see our chapels, particularly Dunkineely and Ardara, crowded with devout hearers, many of whom come four or six miles to hear the word of life. Our sacramental and lovefeast services are seasons never to be forgotten. We have received more than usual attention from the Church of Rome. The priests in two or three localities cursed us and many of our people, some of whom have been frequently denounced, their servants taken away, and, but for a special providence, seriously injured. Some windows also have been broken, and the congregations otherwise annoyed, at a number of our preaching-places. We regret still more that other professed ministers of Christ have given us many sad examples of what may be done by persons professing to be in the Apostolic succession."* After filling up all vacancies in the membership, at the end of the year the servants of God had the joy of reporting a further increase of one hundred and forty, with one hundred and thirty-six on trial.

The Revs. John Dwyer and Andrew Armstrong were appointed

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1858.

to Portadown, and were favoured with cheering tokens of the Divine blessing in saving power. There were numerous conversions, sometimes as many as seventeen at one meeting, and amongst those led to the Saviour was a young man who had been preaching the glorious Gospel in London. Mr. John Shillington, especially, threw himself with great heartiness into the evangelistic work; and Samuel Cowdy, who had been brought to decide for God two years previously at the Connexional School, Dublin, began to work for Christ as a local preacher. At Cloncore, where drunkenness and immorality prevailed and sports were pursued, on the Sabbath, to an extent unusual in Ulster, a pious couple being concerned for a wayward son, had recourse to special prayer, and were at once answered in a marked change in his spirit. This encouraged the mother to ask Mr. Shillington to preach in the neighbourhood. He did so. At the meeting some were awakened and converted, a few days afterwards the young man referred to obtained peace with God, and the work spread for miles round. The place in which the people worshipped soon proved too small, and Mr. Shillington provided, at his own expense, a wooden building, capable of containing about two hundred persons, and designated it the "Tabernacle." This was subsequently enlarged to nearly double the size.

A brief glimpse is afforded at the labours of the Rev. Robert Hewitt at Waterford, where he held a week of special services, which proved the means of much and lasting good. One outcome of the services was the formation of a young men's class for the study of the Scriptures and prayer, and it greatly helped many, some of whom are now preachers of the Gospel. Amongst those converted was a young man who has been very useful as a leader, trustee, and Sunday-school superintendent in London. Another led to the Saviour has done a good work in connection with the Frederick street circuit, Belfast; and a third, Edward De Courcy, has proved a most acceptable and devoted Methodist minister.

Mr. Hewitt also spent a week labouring in connection with the town mission in Coleraine; large numbers attended the services, and the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon them abundantly. At the first and second meetings more than twenty persons professed conversion and promised to meet in class; and at a Society tea-meeting held in the old chapel school-house there

were present thirty-one members of the Society, the fruit of this important mission. Some of those converted at that time are now doing well in America, and others have passed to the home above, leaving a cheering testimony behind them. Mr. Cather entered very heartily into the work of holding field-meetings, the largest of which were held on Dunmull hill. At one of these services, conducted by him and the Rev. William Crook, jun., it was estimated that at least fourteen hundred persons were present. How far these meetings contributed to the success of the subsequent revival eternity alone can tell.

The reports from the circuits and mission-stations of the Primitive Wesleyans were encouraging. From Cork Mr. Thomas C. Maguire writes, "After my arrival here in July last, on examining the state of the Society, I found that religion was at a very low ebb; the members were irregular in their attendance at class-meeting, and the prayer-meetings had for a long time been badly attended. I called the leaders together to consider the affairs of the Society and pray for an improved state of things, and found them willing to co-operate in the use of means for a revival. I then preached a course of sermons on the nature, necessity, and advantage of prayer. Special meetings were appointed to plead for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which were well attended, and to some extent owned of God. Shortly afterwards I saw a gradual improvement in the attendance at the classes, the prayer-meetings increased three-fold, and deep anxiety was evinced by the leaders and many of the members for the conversion of sinners. But nothing remarkable took place until the beginning of November, when we held a series of special meetings; the Lord made bare His holy arm, and many sinners were cut to the heart, while some were filled with peace and joy in believing. Every Sunday night except two, since then, we have had protracted penitent-meetings, at which sinners sought the mercy of God, and frequently on other evenings we have had similar manifestations of the Divine presence. Our December lovefeast was one of the best I ever witnessed, and many of those lately brought to Christ declared what the Lord had done for their souls."*

Concerning Maguiresbridge Mr. John Todd reports, "The

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1858, pp. 111-12.

Lord continues to acknowledge our feeble efforts, and souls are being saved. On Sunday we held the last of our six lovefeasts for the past quarter, and at each of them we had much of the presence and power of the Lord. On most of these occasions the preaching-houses could not contain the people who came to hear the word of life; there were a large number of penitents, and many of them went home rejoicing in the pardoning mercy of God. In connection with one of the Sunday-schools there was a remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit, through the Divine blessing on the efforts of some young men. Amongst the fruit of their labours are many of the scholars and one Roman Catholic youth. A family altar has been erected in his home, at which, morning, noon, and evening, the prayers and praises of the worshippers are presented to God, and he has been appointed an assistant class-leader."*

In Belfast Mr. John White took a noble stand in defence of street preaching. He and other ministers had been in the habit of proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation in the open air without interruption, but now a preconcerted attack was made on those who attempted to do so. When the clergy of the Established Church signified, by bills, their intention of preaching in the open air two local newspapers made an attack on them and their work, called them opprobious names, and invited the mob to silence them. This had the desired effect; and though some faint attempt was made by the authorities to suppress the riotous proceedings, they acted with such indecision and apparent anxiety to conciliate the Romish rabble that the disturbance only became more violent. Under these circumstances the Bishop requested his clergy to desist, and accordingly they did so. This was a great triumph to the Catholics, and it was published in all directions that street-preaching was put down. Then the Rev. Hugh Hanna came forward, stated his intention to preach in the open air, and did so to a large congregation. But while he and this vast assembly were engaged in the service a mob of about five hundred men came upon them, yelling loudly and throwing stones. About forty young men, however, soon scattered them, leaving the audience free to hear to the end in peace. The rabble then went through the town, and beat with stones and sticks those, including

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1858, pp. 50-51.

children, whom they met and thought were Protestants. A fortnight later Mr. Hanna attempted to preach again, in a large yard enclosed with a high wall; but the police drove him and his audience away, amid the jeers and yells of the rowdies. On the following day the walls of the town were covered with placards, stating that "open-air preaching was put down by order of the Government." The friends of the Gospel looked on in amazement, and feared that a measure of their religious liberty had been wrested from them.

Meanwhile Mr. White continued to preach every Sabbath in the streets and lanes of the town as before, and without any annoyance. When, however, the Belfast Presbytery condemned Mr. Hanna's conduct, and requested him to refrain for some time from preaching in the open air, Mr. White felt it to be his duty to go forward, and arranged for a Sunday service in Agnes street. About four thousand persons were present, and not a voice was lifted to interfere with the meeting. He then published for a service on the following Sabbath, on the quays, at the place from which Mr. Hanna had been ejected by the police. About five thousand persons attended, including several Romanists, and all listened with the deepest attention. By special request he then announced he would preach there again on the succeeding Sunday. The day was anticipated with deep anxiety by the friends of religious liberty, and many a prayer was offered that God would restrain the evil passions of men and give a blessing with His word. When the appointed hour came the people crowded from every direction, until not less than ten thousand persons assembled. As they sang the hymn beginning "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun" a grand burst of praise ascended to heaven; and during the sermon the deepest attention prevailed, God evidently applying His word to the people's hearts. On the same day there were three others who preached without molestation in the open air in other parts of the town. Thus not only was a right asserted, but multitudes who had been careless about religion were drawn to hear the Gospel with deep interest, and by means of the services started in this way many were led to the Methodist chapel, and became regular hearers. So God made the wrath of man to praise Him, and brought great and permanent good out of apparent evil.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1858.

Early in 1858 Mr. John Henning, of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference, writes from Springfield, "It is with feelings of pleasure, and I trust with gratitude to God, that I now give an account of the spiritual state and prospects of this circuit. Since this time last year, so far as I can learn, over one hundred persons have been hopefully converted, the greater number of whom are young men, and many of them the children of our own people." This good work, it appeared, commenced at the Derrygonnelly March quarterly meeting of 1857, and from that time the Holy Spirit was poured out abundantly; meetings for prayer, held principally by the leaders, were multiplied, and the people flocked in large numbers to these and the preaching services. "My colleague, Mr. James Elliott," adds Mr. Henning, "engaged in this good work with all his heart, and I cannot speak too highly of the leaders, who also threw themselves with all their soul into the movement. Many of these excellent men, after a hard day's work, travelled miles to prayer-meetings or preaching services, and then spent two or three hours in directing anxious souls to Christ. The means used in promoting this revival was the preaching of God's truth, accompanied by the ardent prayers of God's people." * The membership was thus raised from six hundred and thirty-one to seven hundred and sixty.

The Rev. William G. Campbell held special services in several places, which were greatly blessed. Amongst the rest, those at Cavan were much owned of God, and proved the means of the conversion of a number of young men, who both in the itinerancy and out of it have done a noble work for Christ and for Methodism. These converts included Wesley, son of the Rev.

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1858, p. 176.

William Guard, Stewart Smith, William Lough, and Charles Hayes.

One of the English missionary deputation to the north, this spring, has placed on record his impressions with regard to what he saw in Ireland. Concerning Portadown he says, "Here Methodism is stronger in proportion to the population than in any other town in Ireland, or indeed than in many towns in England. The public collections for the missions were very large, exceeding in amount the proceeds of most of the branch anniversaries in London. Nor are the claims of home overlooked, as in some other places. Portadown is one of the very few Irish circuits in which an adequate provision is made for the sustentation of ministers on the spot. In numerous cases the original financial rule of the Society has been lamentably neglected, while excellent ministers have endured humiliating privations or been driven to America. Happily, a better state of things has been inaugurated. Irish Methodists only require to be informed on this subject in order to be just to their preachers and wise for themselves." With regard to the Society as a whole the writer states, "It is impossible to make this tour without being impressed with the value of Irish Methodism. Its importance in holding up the light of truth amid surrounding darkness, and in provoking other Protestant Churches to a beneficial rivalry in evangelistic efforts, can hardly be over-estimated. Nor is it less valuable as a feeder to the Churches of American and colonial Methodism."*

The accounts furnished by the Wesleyan missionaries of their work during the year were cheering. The two general missionaries visited nearly all the cities and towns in the kingdom, together with a great number of smaller places, in which they preached in the markets, fairs, streets, fields, chapels, barns, houses, and by the wayside, seeking to be instant in season and out of season and to do good unto all men. In some places the door of opportunity for open-air services was shut against them, and it was deemed unwise to attempt to force it; but in others, more especially in the north, a wide door was open, and it was used with good results. One missionary laboured in forty-four circuits, the other in thirty-six, each generally giving one Sabbath to each

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1858, pp. 804, 809.

circuit. One writes, "Out of eighty-five out-door services, in only one case have I met with serious interruption." The other says, "We had plenty of noise, but no blows." Multitudes, including many Romanists, thus heard the message of mercy. One of the missionaries writes, "I am thankful that my health has enabled me to preach on an average nine times a week, and to hold, during the year, three hundred and eighty protracted meetings." The other, who laboured in a part of the country much less favourable to such services, pursued a similar course with similar results. Many thousands of tracts and some copies of the Scriptures, in whole or in part, were distributed where there appeared a probability of their being read. Thus many who, but for this mission, might never have heard of salvation were led to embrace it."

The missionaries appointed to stations, in general, report an increase in both numbers and finances, the securing of some new openings, and tokens of the Divine presence in saving power. Arrangements were made for the erection of two or three new buildings, some old ones were repaired, and a few long-standing debts were paid off. Grateful reference is also made in many instances to the manifest blessing received in connection with visits from the Rev. William G. Campbell.*

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on June 30th. Mr. John White was elected President, and Mr. Thomas Wilson Secretary. William Lutton, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months; and two respected supernumerary brethren, James Robinson of Manorhamilton and Edward Sullivan of Dublin, were reported to have died. On a review of the state of the several circuits and missions, it was found that the work of the Lord was in general prospering; that on some stations extensive revivals had taken place, many souls having been brought to God; and there was a net increase in the number of members of two hundred and sixteen.

The Wesleyan Conference was held in Dublin, the preparatory committees commencing on June 15th. Owing to the difficulties with which the Connexional School had to contend, the review of its affairs was anticipated with some anxiety, but the result was

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, 1858.

highly encouraging. There had been, under the efficient management of the Rev. Robert Crook, LL.B., a steady increase of pupils; the educational department had made most satisfactory progress, several of the boarders had given evidence of a work of grace in their hearts, and the Committee felt assured that with the Divine blessing on such means as had been employed, the institution would surmount its difficulties and prove a lasting benefit to the youth of Irish Methodism. The Revs. Robinson Scott and William Reilly were present at the Committee of the Fund for the Increase of Wesleyan Agency, and gave a pleasing account of their reception in America. The financial panic in that country, and the consequent commercial depression, had operated against the early payment of many of the subscriptions, but it was found that upwards of £7,000 had been transmitted through the hands of the deputation, while upwards of £10,000 had been received from subscribers at home. These sums were provisionally distributed among the objects originally proposed, and sub-committees were appointed to meet during the year for the purpose of considering the best mode of appropriating the amounts thus allotted so as to secure those objects.

On June 23rd the Conference assembled in the Centenary chapel, which was draped with black, as an expression of sorrow on account of the loss the Christian Church had sustained by the death of the Rev. Dr. Bunting. Methodism in Ireland had derived great advantage from his warm attachment to its interests, while the memory of the wisdom of his counsels and the power of his ministrations was most gratefully cherished. The chair was occupied by the Rev. Francis A. West, who was accompanied by the Rev. John Farrar. Isaac Davies, of the British Conference, was received as having travelled twelve months, and five candidates, including John Bates of Ballymore, Samuel Dunlop of the Tanderagee circuit, and Edward Harte, were admitted on trial. Five ministers—Samuel Downing of Belfast North, John Holmes of Athlone, John Nesbitt of Enniskillen, Francis Stephens of Donegal, and John Wiggins of Belfast South—were reported to have died during the year. All the Connexional funds were found to be in a healthy state, some showing an encouraging increase, and none a decrease. Many, it appeared, had sought and received the Spirit of power, and in various parts of the Lord's vineyard

great fruitfulness had been witnessed; so that notwithstanding a loss of four hundred and seventy-four members by emigration, there was a net increase of one hundred and nineteen. The Rev. Samuel Johnston was appointed as a third general missionary, and the Revs. William Cather and Joseph W. M'Kay were elected to accompany Mr. Waugh as Representatives to the British Conference.

In autumn a remarkable seriousness was observed to pervade not only the Wesleyan Methodist congregations of Portadown, but those of other denominations. Revival services were held by the Rev. Robert Hewitt, and were much owned of God, leading to the conversion of R. Crawford Johnson,* Anthony Cowdy, and many others. The classes were increased, and a general quickening was manifest. A meeting for inquirers held each Monday evening also proved the means of much good. Through all this there were none of the young men of the congregation who appeared so uninfluenced or unapproachable as Thomas Shillington (2nd), and one of his cousins, until one Sunday evening, after service, as they walked together, the younger of the two abruptly said, "I have been saying to myself, but I did not care to say it to you, that if ever we are to get religion it's time we were thinking of it." This simple statement, accompanied by the Holy Spirit, proved more effective than all the sermons to which these young men had listened, leading them to resolve to turn to God. Both attended the inquiry-meeting on the following evening, and some time afterwards each obtained a clear evidence of pardon and acceptance with God.

"On the Killala mission," says the Rev. Andrew Armstrong, "the Lord graciously blessed us; and at Ballina, under the superintendency of the Rev. Edward M. Banks, we also had many conversions. At Killala I made the acquaintance of that remarkable man the Rev. P. O'Flaherty, who had just returned from the Crimea. He was a wonderful linguist, having a marvellous facility for acquiring languages, and had acted as an interpreter in the Turkish army. He helped me at many services, and in a large Temperance meeting which I conducted in the Presbyterian meeting-house, Ballinglen, joined the Total Abstinence Society."

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* Son of Alexander Johnson of Antrim.

Mr. O'Flaherty subsequently went as a missionary to Africa, and there, after a brief and most successful career, died of fever.

The Rev. John Donald was appointed to the Sligo circuit, and found that the persecution of 1843-44 had continued with more or less intensity. An application had been made to Joshua Cooper, Esq., the lord of the soil, to ratify the purchase of a site for a chapel in Collooney, but he had declined to do so unless no services could be held in it, in addition to those usually conducted in the town, without the consent of the rector; but to this restriction the leaders in Sligo refused to consent. When all hope of obtaining suitable ground was almost given up a most eligible plot was offered for sale by the Government, and immediately secured by the Society. On applying to the authorities at Dublin Castle for the papers necessary to complete the deed of purchase, they sent, amongst others, the original conveyance of the whole estate from Lord Belmont to an ancestor of Mr. Cooper, which subsequently proved of great value; for Mr. Cooper held the plot in question, was very angry on hearing that it had been purchased by the Methodists, and declined to surrender it. A colonel was sent to make the transfer, and having taken luncheon at Markree Castle, came into Collooney, where the three trustees of the Society * were waiting for him. He then took up the deed just executed, and letting it fall, said, "Gentlemen, your title to this property is not worth the paper it is written on." "If this document does not please you," replied Mr. Leech, "perhaps the old deed from Lord Belmont to the first Joshua Cooper will satisfy you." "Can I see that?" inquired the colonel. "Yes." "Then I will go to Sligo with you, and examine it." He did so, and saw that it conveyed the entire estate, "save and except the barrack plot which is the property of the British Government." This settled the question of title, and the authorities therefore undertook to compel Mr. Cooper to give up possession, which he did most reluctantly and not until the last moment, when he saw there was no other resource. The duty of making the transfer was assigned to the barrack-master of Sligo, and had he been unfriendly he could have occasioned considerable delay and trouble; but it pleased Providence, just at this juncture,

* Messrs. George Leech, Robert Hunter, and Thomas H. Williams.

that a Methodist held the office. He at once went to Collooney to do his duty, and met Mr. Cooper's agent, who began to quibble about some small part of the field. "Are you," said the captain, with indignation, "one of the men who have given the Methodists so much trouble about this plot? and are you come to dispute with me about a bit of a corner, the size of a devil's cocked hat?" At this warm reception the agent gave up the contest.

Possession having been given, and an architect and builder secured, opposition assumed a different form. Through the influence of Mr. Cooper and the curate, the new erection was "boycotted," so that the people of the neighbourhood declined to give either stones or sand, to afford accommodation to workmen, or in any other way to assist the undertaking. Thus from 1855 to 1858 no progress was made in the building, but now Providence opened the way to carry on the work. A young man from Ulster had come to Sligo twenty-five years previously, had made some money, with which he purchased a little estate on which there was a quarry, about two miles from Collooney, and he most freely consented to give the stones. It then so happened that the railway line from Mullingar to Sligo was in course of construction; the contractor purchased a sand-bank, and on one of the leaders, Mr. William Jackson, stating the case to him, he at once gave orders that the Methodists should have as much sand as they required. Thus the work was proceeded with, until the walls were raised to their full height, when they were observed by a gentleman who happened to be a visitor at Markree, and inquired of his host what the building was. Mr. Cooper had not known until then that the building was going on, as no one had dared to tell him, and now he was greatly enraged, more especially as he had made a vow that if the chapel were built and the site retained he would never enter Collooney again. He therefore sent for the trustees to converse with them about a change of site, and they waited on him, accompanied by the Rev. John Donald; but as nothing would satisfy the landlord except a full and unconditional surrender, they could not consent thus to sacrifice the interests of Methodism and the cause of Christ.

The building was at length completed, and arrangements were made for its opening by the Rev. Robert Masaroon. Some timid

friends thought that the people would be afraid to attend the service, but they came in crowds from all quarters. The little square or triangle in front was filled with vehicles, and some of the drivers being pressed for room, unwittingly took their horses into a yard belonging to Mr. Cooper's agent. The ostler ran to his master and said, "The Methodists are putting their horses into your stables." "For God's sake," replied the agent, "let them alone; the town is full of them." Seeing still a want of room, and the owners at a loss where to put their horses and cars, Mr. Donald went amongst them, and pointing to the entrance of a large yard, which belonged to one of Mr. Cooper's carpenters, said, "If that gate will open you might go in there." Whether there was a friend in the yard who heard the words, or some other agency was at work, did not appear, but immediately the gate flew open, and Mr. Donald said, "Now there is a place for your horses and cars," and in they went. In the chapel itself, which seats about two hundred and fifty persons, there was not standing-room for the congregation, so, as the day was beautifully fine, the service was held in the adjoining green plot. Meanwhile a mob of the baser sort had assembled to disturb the proceedings, and as they approached the building there arose in their midst what appeared to be a whirlwind, causing a cloud of dust and leaves, blowing off some of their hats, and filling them all with the utmost terror, so that the ringleader shouted, "Boys, it is the vengeance of God on us; let us fly." This providential interposition saved the worshippers from what might have proved a series of fatal disasters, for it was discovered that the ruffians had arranged to take the linch-pins out of the vehicles, so that when the horses were again yoked in them, and the travellers seated, they might be thrown to the ground as the wheels rolled off.

There were some remarkable instances of self-sacrifice and devotion to Methodism in connection with the erection of the chapel at Collooney. The three Sligo trustees made a noble stand for the cause, regardless of personal pecuniary loss. Notwithstanding numerous and strenuous efforts of persons of influence, Miss Benson and other hosts refused to withhold the kind hospitality they had long and generously given to the ministers. Joshua Woodland suffered persecution rather than abandon the Church he loved. But the most marked case was

that of Mr. Andrew Graham, a leader and local preacher, who had charge of the observatory at Markree. Before the chapel was completed Mr. Cooper said to him, "Graham, if you go to the opening of the Methodist chapel you will lose your situation. Think over it before you come to a decision." "I have done so," replied Mr. Graham, "and my mind is made up that my family and I will go to the opening service. I am ready to sacrifice my situation, but I will not for any consideration violate my conscience." This resolution Mr. Graham carried out, for which he was deprived of his situation; but in time the Lord opened his way to the position which he now occupies in Cambridge, being in every respect a much more desirable one.

It was also a noteworthy circumstance that all who took a leading part in opposing the erection of this chapel died within a short time of its completion. The curate, who was chiefly the cause of all the opposition, took suddenly ill one Sunday, as he stood in the desk of the church, fell down, and in a few minutes expired. A gentleman who complained to Mr. Donald that the building would spoil his view of the country, and thought to stop its progress, died before the walls were sufficiently high to interfere with the prospect from the windows of his house. Mrs. Cooper, who was most active in her opposition, was seized with a disease in her tongue, which ended fatally. Mr. Cooper, although a strong and healthy-looking man at the time of the opening services, gradually sank, and within two years finished his earthly course, but not before he saw the wrong he had done, sent for a Methodist leader whom he had ordered not to enter the Methodist chapel, and said, "I no longer debar you from your place of worship. Go and worship God where your conscience dictates," which he gladly did.

During this the third year of the appointment of the Rev. Edward Best to Donegal there appeared no signs of declension in the good work which had been going on so long on the mission. The congregations both in the chapels and at the field-meetings continued as large as before, and the Lord accompanied the preaching of His word with similar tokens of His presence and power. Many young people were converted, for whose benefit libraries and mutual improvement societies were formed, and the leaders became increasingly devoted to their work. Mr. Best

estimated that during the three years not less than six hundred souls were won for Christ, while the membership rose from four hundred and thirty-five to eight hundred. Many Romanists were brought under the influence of the movement who did not come out boldly for Christ here, but subsequently emigrated to America, and there took the stand which they feared to take at home. At Loughros Point a school-house and teacher's residence were built, at Dunkineely the preaching-house had to be enlarged so as to accommodate about two hundred additional hearers, and at Donegal a new chapel was erected at a cost of upwards of £1,000. At the opening services of this house there was a crowded congregation, the Rev. Gervase Smith preached from Ephesians ii. 1, and the collection amounted to £35. An interesting tea-meeting was held in the basement story in the evening. On the following Sunday the Rev. Robert G. Cather, A.M., preached in the morning from John iii. 30, and the Rev. Robert Wallace in the evening from Matthew xxi. 13.

Mr. John White, the President of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference, gives an exceedingly cheering view of the cause in Belfast. He says, "For upwards of three years God has been pouring out His Holy Spirit on the Society in this town, and making bare His arm in the conversion of sinners, so that a constant steady work has been progressing. There has been no great excitement, such as we witnessed in connection with other revivals, nor has there been at any time a great number of additions to the Society, but there has been an onward movement in every department of our cause. The congregation in Donegal place has gradually increased, from being very small till now 'the place is too strait for us,' being filled with a most attentive and prayerful audience; a new congregation, consisting of between two and three hundred, has been formed, and the classes have largely increased." The means by which this blessed work was commenced and carried on were the offering up by true Christians of united and persevering prayer, the seeking and realizing the all-cleansing efficacy of the Saviour's blood, and the putting forth of faithful and fervent efforts to lead sinners to Jesus. A few of the Lord's people engaged to meet every morning, at half-past six o'clock, to plead with God for the salvation of sinners and the deepening of the work of grace in those who had submitted to

Christ, and there were such displays of Divine power at these services as those present had rarely, if ever, before witnessed.*

From the Tanderagee circuit Mr. John Thompson writes, "Many and ardent prayers here were offered to God that He would pour upon us the Spirit of grace and of supplication, and the Lord was intreated, so that many sinners became earnest seekers of salvation and were hopefully converted. This blessed work began at Derryanvil, where are many walking in the way of their devoted fathers. Then the revival spread to Derryall and all the country round, where numbers have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, and the truth has made them free. There is a very blessed work going on also at Maghon and Derryhale, and souls are being converted to God. My colleague, brother James Elliott, has been very zealous and active in this good work; and so are many of our leaders, who labour much in holding meetings, sometimes travelling miles to and from them, and not getting home until a late hour. At three services, held on the same night in different places, sixteen persons were brought out of darkness into the light of the Lord." It was estimated that at least one hundred and fifty souls had been converted, the classes were greatly increased, and the congregations became so large that sometimes the houses could not accommodate those who desired to be present.†

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1858, pp. 363-67.
† *Ibid*, pp. 368-69.

CHAPTER XL.

1859.

The year 1859 is memorable in the annals of Ireland as that of the great revival which quickened the spiritual life of the Protestant churches and proved fruitful in blessing to untold thousands. Its origin was simple. The Rev. William G. Campbell being most wishful to be able to preach to the Irish in their own language, in the autumn of 1857 paid a visit to Antrim, where the Rev. John Feely was stationed, and requested him to give the needed instruction. He consented, on condition that Mr. Campbell would hold a series of special services while in the town—terms that were most congenial to the general missionary. These meetings were held, were largely attended, and proved the means of a vast amount of good. Amongst the many converted to God was a young man named James M'Quilkin, a Presbyterian from the parish of Connor, who soon afterwards, with a heart full of love to Christ, returned to his native district of country. Meanwhile here another young man, a member of the same congregation, was led to seek and find a clear and joyful sense of his acceptance with God. In September, the very same month in which the first noon-day prayer-meeting, the harbinger of the great revival, was held in New York, James M'Quilkin, Jeremiah Meneely, John Wallace, and an old Wesleyan named Robert Vance joined together in Christian fellowship, to pray for God's blessing on the people around them. They met in a little school-house, and for three months their prayers seemed to rise to an unheeding Heaven. In December one conversion revived their hearts; in the course of the following month, there was a second led to the Saviour; and three months later two persons, who had been frequently prayed for, were brought to know the Lord. Thus slowly and silently did God at first work

and thus steadily did these disciples continue to wait till His Spirit was poured out abundantly from on high.

Meanwhile accounts were published of the wonderful awakening in America and the vast numbers who had been converted to God. Intimations also were given, chiefly by those who visited the neighbourhood, of the blessed work in the parish of Connor, where during the whole of 1858 conversions, sudden and clear as those narrated in the New Testament, took place. Thus throughout Ulster, especially, the attention of the unconverted was directed to the subject of vital godliness, and a spirit of holy expectation was excited in the minds of true Christians, leading to much and fervent prayer.

The way in which the revival spread was in keeping with that in which it began. Early in 1859 one who felt the joy of pardoning love filling his own soul longed to see his mother, who lived in the neighbouring parish of Ahoghill, as happy as grace had made himself, and therefore got one of his comrades to join him in earnest prayer for her conversion. Then he went home to see the effect, and to his joy and wonder, found that while they had been praying deep conviction had seized his mother's conscience, and she sought and found mercy. This triumph of prayer was no sooner won than came the question, "Where is my brother?" "Away at a cock-fight." Thither the young Christian followed him, and seizing him, said, "I have a message for you from the Lord Jesus." This went to the heart of the wayward youth; he, too, felt the pangs of deep repentance, and soon fled for refuge to the hope set before him in the Gospel. In the joy and simplicity of his heart, he ran away to his minister, exclaiming, "I am saved! I am saved!" The ambassador of Christ at first feared that the convert was only heated with some passing fervour, but on investigating the case, said, "I wish we had some of those young men over here to hold prayer-meetings." This wish led to the coming of converts from Connor to tell the people of Ahoghill what the Lord had done for their souls. It was a strange thing to hear weavers, stone-breakers, butchers, and others unskilled in speech pouring forth effectual, fervent, and withal reverent and thoughtful prayers. It was more wonderful still to hear them tell how the Lord had sent His arrows through their souls, and how He had forgiven the iniquity of their sin.

The power of the blessed Spirit accompanied the simple story, the hearts of the people were broken, and then began those overwhelming affections of body and mind which resounded through the world, and made the revival notorious to the religious and the curious alike.*

Early in April the good work extended to Ballymena; men and women from the adjoining country, while engaged in their ordinary calling, were stricken in the open streets, and led to cry aloud for mercy. In this way a profound and wide-spread impression was made, and meetings for exhortation and prayer were held, until all business seemed at a standstill. The ministers of the different Protestant denominations threw themselves unitedly and heartily into the work, and the congregations of each participated in the reviving influence. In common with their brethren, the Methodists shared in the showers of blessings, large numbers flocked to the services in the chapel, and the slain of the Lord were many. Although a goodly proportion of those thus converted remained in connection with the Churches of their fathers, yet the increase to the Wesleyan congregation was such that the chapel had to be considerably enlarged, the classes were increased from two to six, tract distributors were appointed, and a promising total abstinence society was established.

The Rev. William Crook, jun., when news of the revival began to spread, went to Ahoghill, saw and judged for himself, and brought back with him to Ballymoney some of the young men recently converted. Aided by these converts, he immediately commenced a series of public services which were characterized by remarkable displays of Divine power. From Ballymoney the good work spread to Coleraine.

Mr. Crook arranged for an open-air meeting, on the Fair hill, on Tuesday, June 7th, a day never to be forgotten in the history of the town. By a singular coincidence, an arrangement was also made by some of the Presbyterian brethren for a similar meeting on the same day, on the opposite side of the river; but by consultation apparent opposition was prevented. The weather was beautifully fine; immense crowds, including ministers and members of all denominations, flocked from all directions; addresses were delivered by two of the recent converts and others,

* Arthur's Beginnings of a Great Revival, pp. 11-13.

and the Spirit descended in mighty power, so that many were deeply convinced of sin and stricken to the ground. The work thus begun spread, with marvellous rapidity, to the homes of the people, until the whole town was in one glorious revival flame. Many similar gatherings, on the Fair hill and elsewhere, were held subsequently and with like results. On the night of the 9th some one suggested that the town-hall, just completed, would be a fitting place to shelter the many stricken ones who continued in the open air crying for mercy, and the suggestion was at once acted upon. A sacred interest, therefore, is attached to this beautiful building, from the fact that the first use for which it was employed was to shelter poor sinners while they agonized in prayer for the pardon of their sins. On Friday, June 10th, the gracious work broke out in one of the schools of the Irish Society, then under the care of Mr. Canning, a respected leader in the Methodist Society. One of those converted on that day has proved a highly esteemed and useful officer of the Methodist Church. During a subsequent visit of the Rev. William Arthur the chapel was crowded at a fellowship-meeting, which was remarkable for the rich spiritual blessings enjoyed by those present and the precious testimonies borne as to the fruits of the revival.

The work now spread to the north-west. A gentleman in Newtownlimavady having visited Ahoghill, and witnessed the good work there, was so deeply impressed that on returning home he arranged for a meeting in his own demesne on the following Sunday. About ten thousand persons were present; the Rev. James Donald delivered the first address, and during it the Spirit of the Lord was poured out from on high; a stricken case occurred, and a work of grace commenced that led to the conversion of about one thousand persons in the town and neighbourhood. One Sunday a young woman was stricken in the Roman Catholic chapel, and the doors were immediately closed to prevent her screams being heard outside. Another Romanist was stricken in her own house, and on her father praying to the blessed Virgin to come and banish the evil spirit, the girl cried, much to his annoyance, "None but Jesus! none but Jesus!"

From this town the revival extended to Londonderry. The Rev. Robert Wallace having visited Ballymoney and secured the

assistance of some of the young converts, arranged for special meetings in the city on Sunday, June 12th. At the morning service in the Wesleyan chapel addresses were delivered by the converts, one of whom said that he had been greatly addicted to drink, but after his conversion hated it and all sin. It had been stated, he added, that it was the work of Satan, but he was sure the devil had never put him from drinking whisky. He was followed by a young man, the narration of whose experience was so extraordinary as to remind one forcibly of the conversion of Colonel Gardiner. A young woman also spoke with simplicity and power. As, however, Mr. Wallace calmly read a letter from the Rev. James Donald, giving an account of the revival on his circuit, the congregation was startled by a sudden cry from a man who, with outstretched arms and upturned face, presented a picture of misery. The Rev. James Donnelly, who was present, spoke to the poor sinner, directing him to the Saviour, and as he repeated the cheering invitation in Matthew xi. 28 the penitent sprang to his feet, his face beaming with joy, and referring to his burden of guilt, exclaimed, "Thank God, it's all gone now!" This was the beginning of a glorious work during which hundreds were led to Christ. On the following day the Evangelical ministers in the city met for breakfast, and arrangements were made for a united attack on the kingdom of Satan. For six weeks in succession there were held daily a union prayer-meeting in a lecture-room or hall, an afternoon open-air service in the Victoria corn-market, and an evening service in each church, and these were attended by large congregations. The city and country were wonderfully moved, secular business seemed almost at a standstill, and there was scarcely a Presbyterian meeting-house for miles round in which Mr. Donnelly did not preach or take some part in the service.

The good work also spread in other directions. Ahoghill lies to the north-west of Connor, Ballyclare to the south-east. Here, in May, a large fair was held, during which a slater, named Samuel Todd, a wicked backslider, was told that there was a man in the fair who had lost his reason. Todd hastened to the fair hill, and there saw a man from the neighbourhood of Broughshane who, as he came into the town, had been seized with such deep convictions of sin that, regardless of the eye of the crowd or the

course of business, he cried aloud for mercy. The slater as he looked on became deeply concerned about his own state, and resolved to seek some one who would teach him the way to the Cross. Making for the direction whence the man who cried in the fair had come, he met with some persons who said, "Go to Connor; there is the country where you'll find the people you want." He did so, was cordially welcomed by the young converts, and at a prayer-meeting on the following day God spoke peace to his troubled spirit. Now as if it had been said to him, "Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee," he did return, told his tale of redeeming love, and soon blessed results followed. At first many feared that his mind had given way, others mocked him, but a few joined him and became just as singular in their movements.

On Saturday evening, May 28th, the Rev. Robert Collier took his stand at the monument, and preached to about four hundred persons, including some of the most reckless characters in the neighbourhood. At the close of the service those who were anxious crowded into an adjoining house, Todd gave them an account of his conversion, and one or two of those present were strangely affected. On the following Tuesday a messenger from Doagh came to Mr. Collier, saying that a young woman had been stricken there while at her work that morning, and was anxious to see him. He went at once, and found that other girls also had been taken from the same mill, apparently in a similar state, but not really convinced of sin. Next day the work broke out at Ballyclare in a way that far surpassed the highest expectations of the Lord's people. During an open-air service in the neighbourhood numbers were smitten to the ground in penitence of spirit, and cried aloud for mercy, so as to be heard from afar. They returned homeward surrounded by an awe-stricken crowd, weeping, praying, and praising God, and thus moved the whole town. That night houses were to be seen in all directions thronged with people and resounding with words of prayer or songs of thanks giving. Christian workers spoke to and sang or prayed with the penitents until they found peace. Numerous services were held, which were largely attended, frequently addressed by young converts, and accompanied with marvellous power. Thus the work deepened and spread, bringing under its sanctifying influ-

ence old and young, the moral and religious, as well as the most abandoned and profligate. Some, it is true, were very ignorant, had little sense of their state, and looked upon their novel experience as a kind of epidemic which they rejoiced in getting over easily; but in general it was far otherwise.

On Friday, June 3rd, an open-air service was held at Ballynure to which about three hundred converts marched, singing hymns, from Ballyclare. At least one thousand persons were present, addresses were delivered by Mr. Vance of Connor and the Rev. Robert Collier, and results similar to those already described followed. One and another were stricken, and carried into the Wesleyan chapel or some friend's house, to be prayed with and spoken to, until scores were thus removed. When the day closed it was with difficulty the people could be induced to leave the field, and some would not do so, while all along the different roads homeward people sang, prayed, and in other ways endeavoured to encourage the penitents.

On Sunday, June 12th, Mr. Alexander Fullerton preached in the Wesleyan chapel at Hyde Park, one of the leaders gave an account of the revival at Ballyclare and Ballynure, and an opportunity was afforded some converts who were present of witnessing for Christ. While one of these, a lad of fourteen from Ballyclare, gave an account of his conversion, and, with tears, entreated the people to come to the Saviour, another lad began to sob and weep. The young convert then ran forward, caught the penitent in his arms, and besought him to look to Jesus, and he would be saved. The affection of the boy seemed to break down the hearts of the people; one general cry burst forth from the congregation, and sinners fell all around, confessing their sins and imploring pardon. The saved of the Lord were many, and they were but the first-fruits of a glorious harvest. Meetings were conducted in the chapel every night for seven or eight weeks, and there was scarcely a service at which souls were not converted. At one of these meetings a gay and thoughtless youth, named Andrew M'Ilwaine, when he saw the people falling down on all sides, fled from the house, lest he should also be compelled to yield, and remembering an appointment with a comrade in another part of the country, hastened thither to find his friend converted, and he himself in the very condition he had dreaded. Thus he was led

to the Saviour and began a course of Christian labour, which eventuated in his entering the Methodist itinerancy.

At Belfast this wonderful awakening commenced in Berry street meeting-house, where one of the brethren from Ballymena addressed a large audience, and about twenty persons were seriously and visibly affected. On the following evening the house could not contain one-fifth of those who sought admittance, and when for safety the door was closed those outside, divided into three sections, determined to attend meetings elsewhere, which they did in May street, Eglinton street, and the Primitive Wesleyan chapel, Donegal place. Special services were then arranged for in a large number of places of worship, and at these addresses were delivered by Messrs. M'Quilkin, Meneely, and other young converts, as well as by ministers. Meanwhile the work spread rapidly in the homes of the operatives, more especially in Ewart's row, Ballymacarret, and Sandy row. From hundreds of houses, night and day, were heard loud cries for mercy, the voice of prayer or the sweet soothing tones of sacred song. A large number of Christian workers went about to minister to the religious instruction and spiritual comfort of the poor stricken sufferers, and meetings for prayer were thus held in private houses, at almost all hours of the day and night. The whole town was thus most profoundly stirred.

In the midst of these scenes of hallowed excitement and Gospel triumph ministers and laymen assembled in Belfast to attend the annual Wesleyan Committees of Review and Conference, the former beginning on June 15th, and the latter on the 22nd. The chair was occupied by the Rev. John Bowers, who was accompanied from England by the Revs. John Lomas, Francis A. West, and William Arthur, A.M. There were two vacancies on the Irish proportion of the Legal Hundred, and these were filled by the election of the Rev. Dr. Appelbe by ballot and the Rev. John Armstrong by seniority, in the places of the Revs. John Carey and Robert Bruce, superannuated. Three brethren were reported to have died during the year. These were Edward Johnston (1st), who had settled in the United States, John Harrington of Newry, and Samuel Johnston of the general mission, who finished his course in Lurgan. Seven candidates, including Henry Evans and Robert Geale of Magherafelt, Samuel Weir of Rathfryland, and William R.

Starkey, were received on trial. As the revival outside the parishes of Connor and Ahoghill had not begun until after the membership returns had been made up, the increase of two hundred and eighty-five did not include any of the results of this gracious visitation. The Revs. Thomas Waugh, Robert G. Jones, and Wallace M'Mullen were elected Representatives to the British Conference, and the Rev. Robinson Scott to the General Conference in America. Mr. M'Mullen was also appointed one of the Secretaries of the Contingent Fund, the Rev. Thomas Waugh having retired from the treasurership, and the Rev. Henry Price, who had been Secretary, was appointed Treasurer. When considered in relation to the general interests of the Connexion, this may certainly be regarded as a most important appointment. In 1853 a new departure had been made in connection with the Contingent Fund, by the establishment of the Circuit Aid and Extension Fund, but much progress had not been effected. Mr. M'Mullen, however, soon mastered the situation so completely that the administration of the fund was practically in his hands, and was brought into most systematic and efficient operation.

The numerous public services held during the session of the Conference, not only in the chapels, but also in the open air, were occasions of great spiritual power and blessing. These meetings were held in all directions and on every day, and on one occasion the Conference adjourned in order that the members might attend a united prayer-meeting in the Music hall, under the presidency of the bishop of the diocese. "Glory be to God," the ministers say in their Pastoral Address, "for what we have heard, and seen, and felt during this Conference. The Holy Spirit is graciously at work in the various Churches, and many sinners have been converted. In public and in private, in the house, the street, the field, the family, and the Sunday-school the Lord Jesus has been saving sinners. In many instances prostration of bodily strength and loud and bitter cries testify to the power with which conviction seizes the mind, but a large number of converts are brought to God without these extraordinary symptoms. There is great demand for the Word of God. The spirit of prayer is very prevalent, large congregations attend public worship, and thousands assemble at union prayer-meetings. At one of our Conference field-meetings, it is believed, ten thousand persons were present,

and at a union prayer-meeting held in the Botanic gardens it is estimated that twenty thousand were there. At all these meetings the power of the Holy Ghost rested on the people, many were born again, and there is a general expectation of still greater things." Ministers and laymen, endued afresh with Divine power, returned to their different spheres of usefulness, and thus the gracious work extended wider and wider.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference commenced its forty-fourth annual meeting in Dublin on June 29th. Mr. John Wherry was elected President, and Mr. Thomas C. Maguire Secretary. Three of the preachers, James Herbert of Newry, William Lendrum of Newtownstewart, and William Stokes of Dundalk, had been removed by death, and seven candidates, including James Carson of Cavan and Robert Ker of Clones, were admitted on trial. On reviewing the state of the circuits and missions, it was found that the revivals which had taken place on several of them during the preceding year had not only continued, but greatly extended, and that the Society had largely participated in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with which nearly all the sections of the Church had been blessed. The increase in the membership amounted to eight hundred and twenty-one, while upwards of two thousand members had been added between the time of the making up of the returns and the meeting of the Conference. During the sessions of this body an unusual sense of the Divine presence and power was felt, and overflowing congregations attended the public services, especially those set apart for reports from brethren who had witnessed and taken part in the great revival.

In July Dr. and Mrs. Palmer, from America, arrived at Belfast, entered heartily into the Lord's work, and rejoiced greatly at the manifest and abundant tokens on every hand of the presence and blessing of God. Revival services had been held, with blessed effects, in most of the Wesleyan and Primitive Wesleyan chapels, but that in Donegal square had not been equally favoured. This was owing to a change of ministers and other untoward circumstances. Here the American evangelists commenced to work, and in the course of a few days were able to write, "In no place that we hear from is the flame of revival burning more intensely than in some of the Wesleyan chapels here, particularly Donegal square.

This commodious and beautiful edifice is nightly filled. A solemn awe seems depicted on every countenance, the large communion rail is at every service surrounded with seekers, and from thirty to forty are, evening after evening, raised up to testify to the power of Christ to save. Our heavenly Joshua, also, is gloriously manifesting His power in bringing His Israel up out of the wilderness into the rest of faith; among these some are ministers, and several are leading men." *

Now the work spread southward. At Lisburn it appears to have commenced in the Primitive Wesleyan chapel. Mr. George Hamilton preached in the street, night after night, and then invited his hearers into the house, until it was unable to accommodate the crowds, sometimes amounting to two thousand persons, who desired to be present. Cries for mercy were heard in all parts of the building, and there were numerous cases of physical prostration. Amongst those converted were persons of every religious denomination in the town, including Roman Catholics, who at once repudiated the errors of their Church.†

In the gracious fruits of the revival the Dromore circuit, where the Rev. Oliver M'Cutcheon was stationed, participated largely. Much prayer was offered, the congregations increased, and at length the Lord answered by fire. The Holy Ghost descended in converting power, first in the houses of the people, and afterwards on the congregations; many were cut to the heart and led to cry aloud for mercy. It was a deeply interesting spectacle, on one occasion, when those recently brought to the knowledge of the truth marched in solemn procession through the street, singing hymns, and then crowded into the Wesleyan chapel. The country parts of the circuit, however, shared even more largely than the town in these showers of blessing.‡ At Banbridge also similar scenes were witnessed, chiefly in connection with the labours of Mr. Conlin of the Primitive Wesleyan Society.§

At Donaghadee the first token of the coming shower was in the Wesleyan Sunday-school, where there was a blessed mani-

* *Four Years in the Old World*, pp. 45—58.
† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, p. 111.
‡ *Irish Evangelist*, 1860,
§ *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, p. 114.

festation of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. A young woman was affected to bodily weakness, and the work thus begun soon spread until "the town was in a blaze." One Sabbath morning, as the Rev. William Brown preached in the beautiful chapel erected about five years previously in Newtownards, a woman started to her feet, and in tones that startled and thrilled the congregation, shouted, "Jesus is come! Jesus is come!" She was removed by the leaders to the school-room; but soon another and another had to be taken away, until preaching had to give place to prayer and praise, for many a stout heart was subdued. The news spread; in the evening the chapel was crowded, and thus the revival extended, until its blessed influence was felt in almost every house.*

The revival broke out at Lurgan on Sunday morning, July 3rd, in the Presbyterian meeting-house, where a young woman was stricken. In the evening, at the Primitive Wesleyan chapel, there were eight similar cases, including one young person who went to mock, and was carried out calling aloud for mercy. The work soon extended to other Protestant Churches, and the Methodist ministers, both Wesleyan and Primitive, threw themselves into it most fervently, preaching in the open air, holding special services in the chapels and other preaching-places, and visiting the penitents in their houses. At one of these meetings, in the Wesleyan chapel the power of God was so manifest that the Rev. John Armstrong exclaimed, "Pentecost returned! Pentecost returned! Glory! glory! Hallelujah!" The Wesleyan chapels at Bluestone, Ballynacor, and Bannfoot were also the scenes of many glorious displays of Divine power and grace.† In the middle of October it was estimated that more than a thousand souls had been converted in the Lurgan Primitive Wesleyan chapel alone.‡

At Portadown daily union prayer-meetings were commenced in the town-hall, and continued for several weeks, without intermission, and in various parts of the adjoining country similar means were adopted on a smaller scale. In connection with these services several persons were brought to a saving knowledge of

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1860, pp. 78 and 86.
† *Ibid*, 1882, pp. 946 and 959.
‡ *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1859, p. 363.

the truth. On the evening of July 11th the work received a great impulse, and from that date progressed with wonderful rapidity and power. A considerable number of persons had assembled in a field, adjacent to the town, for an open-air service, and as a young man from Belfast told, in a simple and unimpassioned way, what he had seen of the revival, two persons were seized with deep convictions of sin. Next day there was a marked change in the tone of feeling throughout the town. Earnest people were inspired with courage and confidence, fear took possession of many who had been unconcerned, and a spirit of solemnity rested on the entire population. Similar services were held each evening, during the following fortnight, in a field where a new Wesleyan chapel was about to be erected, and at each of these conversions took place, while on one occasion not less than forty entered into the liberty of the children of God. Amongst the trophies of Divine grace were many persons of mature, and even advanced age, and some who had been notorious transgressors. Those who had not bowed in prayer for years, those who had been habitual drunkards, and those who had seldom uttered a sentence without an oath yielded to the influence of saving grace. Several females also, who had sunk to the lowest point of moral degradation and wretchedness, were made witnesses of the Saviour's love, and for them suitable employment was secured. From the town the work soon spread to the surrounding country. The season was a very dry one, and it was customary to hold the Sabbath and week-evening services in the open air, retiring to some adjacent house to pray with those in distress. Here the local preachers, with Mr. John Shillington at their head, found a congenial field of labour, which they cultivated most diligently. Many incidents might be given in illustration of the powerful and widespread influence of the Spirit upon the people. Each locality had a history of its own, and no matter how indisposed persons might be to yield to the power of the movement, or even to regard it with any degree of appreciation, they were constrained to acknowledge its superhuman character and its blessed results. At the September lovefeast, when the Wesleyan chapel at Portadown was filled, the large school-room was thrown open, and it was soon crowded; then the town-hall was secured and proved inadequate, and then the court-house was placed at

the disposal of a fourth congregation!* Similar success attended the labours of the Primitive Wesleyans on this circuit, and by each Society a considerable amount of additional chapel accommodation had to be provided. The Wesleyans erected houses at Derrylee, Edenderry, Derryall, and Corcrain; and the Primitives built one at Derryall, and enlarged another at Derryanvil.

At Armagh the revival began on August 17th, at a prayer-meeting in the Primitive Wesleyan chapel, where a woman was led to cry for mercy, and did not cry in vain. On returning home, she proclaimed to all whom she met what the Lord had done for her, and thus next day her dwelling became a house of prayer. In the evening another meeting was held, in the neighbourhood in which she lived, and at it four or five persons were stricken, while seven professed to have obtained a sense of sins forgiven.† Amongst the Wesleyans the first appearance of this gracious work was at a Sabbath-school festival. While an address was delivered to the children, the Holy Spirit descended in great power, and cries arose from almost every pew. Soon some rejoiced under a sweet sense of pardon, while others wept, and one "could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of weeping." Little groups of children, singing and praying, formed in every corner of the chapel. Such was the sacred influence which rested on all that a quantity of fruit, brought for distribution, was quite forgotten, and it was near midnight before the children could be got to retire, with their parents, to their respective homes. The revival now spread through the city in all directions. Meetings were held in private houses, in barns, and in the open air. On September 14th a field-meeting was held, to enable people to attend which excursion trains were run from Belfast and Dublin. About fifteen thousand persons were present. Dr. Lynn presided, and addresses were delivered by ministers and laymen in different parts of the field. Deep conviction of sin seized many hearts, and numbers fell to the ground crying for mercy. The Rev. Robert Huston counted eight of these congregations, and there were twenty-five professed conversions in the meeting conducted by the Rev. Robert Hewitt. The quarterly lovefeast was held soon afterwards, but the chapel was quite insufficient to hold

* Memorial of T. A. Shillington, J.P., pp. 141-48.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, p. 40.

the congregation. So one half went into the newly erected school-house, where they were ably addressed by the Rev. Henry Evans, while those in the chapel were favoured with a powerful discourse from Mr. Huston. A number of persons were stricken, and were then removed to the parlour of the adjoining manse, where the leaders prayed with them and pointed them to the Lamb of God. One girl, the daughter of a leader, was in deep distress, and cried out in an agony, "Lord, I cannot wait another moment. Have mercy upon me." The next instant she jumped up from her knees, clapped her hands, and with a countenance beaming with joy, sang the refrain of a then very popular hymn—

"The Lord has pardoned all my sins;
That's the news, that's the news."

Many found mercy that day, and such a scene of rejoicing was witnessed as had never before been seen in the city.* In addition to Armagh, the places on the circuit most largely blessed were Killylea, College Hall, Richhill, and Markethill. Hundreds were added to the Society, and new classes were organized in all directions. At Markethill the work first appeared in the Wesleyan Sabbath-school, at the annual festival on August 2nd, and from this centre it spread to all the neighbouring Churches. Thus the good seed, which had been sown by loving labourers, was quickened, and brought forth much fruit. At Killylea such numbers assembled night after night that the usual preaching-place could not accommodate them. Therefore a barn was rented, and in it hundreds were converted to God. One girl, who obtained mercy there, died soon afterwards, and her dying request was to be buried in the adjoining graveyard, as she wished to have her remains laid as near as possible to the place where God had spoken peace to her soul. The membership of the Primitive Wesleyans on this circuit was increased from three hundred and forty to one thousand.

For some time the minds of the people at Moy had been deeply impressed. Open-air services were held at which there was manifested much of the Divine presence, and at length the refreshing shower descended. On Sunday evening, July 11th, the Primitive Wesleyan chapel was crowded; the power of God came down on the people; several fell from their seats, stricken,

* Lynn's Wesleyan Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, pp. 138-40.

and others who attempted to run away from the presence of the Lord were, in the porch or at their own houses, overtaken by an influence they could not resist. The services were continued with similar tokens of the presence of God, the news spread widely, and many came from a distance to see and hear for themselves. The September lovefeast, says Mr. Heatley, was the most extraordinary meeting ever witnessed in the neighbourhood. About six hundred persons squeezed into the chapel, while as many more were outside. It proved a veritable Bochim, for the preacher had no sooner announced his text than the pent-up feelings of the people burst forth, and preaching was rendered out of the question. Blackwatertown, Tamnaghmore, Derryscollop, and Killyman, as well as Cookstown, also partook largely of the blessings that the Lord poured out on the people.*

At Aughnacloy the servants of God had been anxiously and prayerfully looking for a share in these blessings, and on July 5th a young man who had been stricken a few days previously on his way home from the market delivered an address at a place about two miles from the town; the power of the Lord descended on the people, and about eight or ten persons were smitten to the ground. So loud and bitter were their cries that they were heard afar off, and a young man at a distance, hearing them, was himself seized with conviction of sin, and cried aloud for mercy. The work thus begun soon spread, until the country around was all on fire.†

Mr. James Wilson had been appointed by the Primitive Wesleyans to Clones, and on his return from Conference arranged with ministers of other denominations for open-air services. These were largely attended, and a very gracious influence rested on them. It was not, however, until Tuesday, August 30th, that the revival broke out. On that day, as one of two young men from Aughnacloy addressed a crowded assembly, a man cried aloud for mercy; his cry was followed by that of several others, and soon many were deeply affected. The service was continued to an early hour on the following morning, when numbers returned to their houses in deep mental agony, and others exulted in a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." The meetings

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, pp 48—52.
† *Ibid*, 1860, pp. 105-10.

were continued night after night, with increasing evidence of the Divine presence and power, until a marked change took place in the moral condition of the town, whole families of some of the worst characters having been converted, and houses that had been the scenes of revelry and vice having become vocal with the praises of God. On one occasion an open-air service was held, at which between four and five thousand persons were present, most of whom were happy in God. It was a scene never to be forgotten, as they marched into town singing the hymn beginning, "All hail the power of Jesu's name." *

After some six or seven weeks of special prayer, in connection with both the Wesleyan and the Primitive Wesleyan Societies at Cootehill, on Sunday, August 28th, a united meeting was held in the open air, which was attended by about a thousand persons, and addressed by Messrs. James Oliver and Robert Campbell, together with two converts from Ballymena. Towards the close of the service the Lord poured out His Spirit in abundant blessing. The congregation retired, singing hymns, and filled each of the chapels, where, until after midnight, were heard the cries of penitents and the songs of new-born babes in Christ. For weeks following such displays of saving power and grace were witnessed as had never before been seen in the neighbourhood. Meetings were held every night, all denominations shared in the benefits, and the slain of the Lord were many. Similar scenes also were witnessed at Bailieborough and at several of the country appointments. "The September love feast at Cootehill," says the Rev. Thomas Foster, "was the most extraordinary I ever attended," and that at Bailieborough, conducted by the Rev. James Oliver, was hardly less remarkable.

Messrs. Alexander Elliott and Alexander M'Cormack, on their appointment to Ballyjamesduff, began to pray and work for a revival, and secured the sympathy of the people committed to their care. For some time there was little apparent result, but in August, at a series of open-air services, the Lord answered by fire. At the first of these meetings a young woman fell from her seat to the ground, uttering a loud cry for mercy, and she was followed by about ten or twelve others. One lad cried out, "Come, Lord Jesus!" after a short time said, "Oh, He is coming! I see

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1859, pp. 364-69.

Him!" and then joyously exclaimed, "He is come! He is come!" The blessed work spread through the surrounding country, and the saved of the Lord, including several Roman Catholics and some of the worst characters in the neighbourhood, were indeed many.*

Concerning Cavan the Rev. Richard Maxwell states that the revival influence affected the circuit very unequally, the conversions in some neighbourhoods being quite numerous, but in others comparatively few. The chief instrumentality employed was that of new converts from a distance, and the cases of physical prostration, except in one or two localities, were not numerous. At the December quarterly visitation of the classes there was found a net increase of one hundred and thirty-one members, with one hundred and eleven on trial.†

Mr. Thomas Abraham of Maguiresbridge writes, "Our largest chapels cannot contain the crowds of anxious hearers who attend our ministry, so that we have occasionally to address them in the open air. The truth thus sent forth among thousands, accompanied by the Holy Spirit, has to a wide extent destroyed the face of the covering cast over the people and the veil that was spread over the hearts of the unregenerate, the result of which has been that since the Conference about one hundred and fifty have turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God."‡ The Rev. Francis Morrow of Brookeborough describes the showers of blessing which fell on his circuit, including Fivemiletown, Tempo, and Clogher, and leading to an addition of two hundred and thirty members.§

On the Enniskillen circuit the Wesleyans, the Primitive Wesleyans, and the Presbyterians united together in holding open-air services, which were attended by vast numbers, and much good was done. The work soon extended to the surrounding country. Lisnaskea, Inishmore, and Knockmanoul all shared in the blessings of this gracious visitation. More than two hundred and fifty members were added to the Primitive Wesleyan Society alone.

At Pettigo arrangements were made for a series of union meetings in the open air, conducted by the Wesleyans, the Primitive Wesleyans, and the Presbyterians, at the close of which the

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, pp. 53—55.
† *Irish Evangelist*, 1860, p. 46.
‡ *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, p. 47.
§ *Irish Evangelist*, 1860, p. 38.

members of the congregation retired to their respective places of worship for special prayer. Although the attendance at these was very large, amounting to about two thousand, yet at the two or three first meetings nothing remarkable occurred, until August 28th, when the Lord poured out His Spirit abundantly. From that time the work went on gloriously. New classes were formed by both Societies, old ones largely increased, and a noble band of devoted young men raised up to work as leaders.*

Concerning Ballyshannon Mr. James Irwin writes that he never had gone to a circuit before which was in such a state of spiritual death, but he and his colleague, Mr. James Carson, entered heartily into the work, and in two or three months were cheered with abundant tokens of the Lord's blessing. There were crowded congregations, protracted meetings, classes increased from six or seven members to twenty or thirty, and hundreds of souls converted to God.†

Mr. John M'Ilroy states concerning the result of the work at Fintona, "I held the September quarterly meeting there; the house could not contain the people, over one hundred being seated outside, and the Lord made bare His arm. The display of the Spirit's power in the awakening of sinners exceeded all that had ever been witnessed before by those present. The meeting continued until a late hour at night, and thirty-eight persons professed to have been made happy in God."‡

From Omagh Mr. Joseph Payne writes, "In this district, during the last two months, a great work of the Lord has taken place, and is still progressing. A spirit of grace and supplication has been poured out, meetings are held every evening, and often the whole night is spent in prayer. Some Romanists have got good. Such is the deep anxiety evinced that we cannot, in many instances, get the meetings closed until a late hour. We held our quarterly meeting at Sixmilecross in the new market-house, which was greatly crowded, and fourteen or sixteen were converted."§ Amongst those won for Christ during this gracious work was

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* *Irish Evangelist*, 1860, p. 39, and *Primitive Wesleyan Magazine*, 1860, pp. 172-73.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Magazine*, 1860, p. 42.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 173.

§ *Ibid*, 1860, p. 110.

William Livingston, who subsequently entered the itinerancy. The Society in Omagh, however, felt deeply the want of a suitable place of worship, but this lack was supplied by the erection of a new chapel, at a cost of about £500. This building was opened by Mr. John White and Dr. Heather.

The revival extended even to Donegal, where the Revs. John Hazelton, John Wilson, and Andrew Armstrong were now stationed; very large union meetings were held both in the Wesleyan chapel and in the open air, and thus the good work spread to Episcopalian and Presbyterian congregations. The account of at least one of the conversions must not be omitted. Mr. Graham was chosen builder of the new chapel at Donegal, but died before the work was completed. His son James would then have been employed, but he was such an abandoned drunkard that Mr. Best had to take charge of the undertaking himself. One day Mr. Quarry said to this young man, "James, I have been praying for you." "There is no use," was the reply. "As long as you are out of hell," the servant of God added, "I will not cease to pray for you." These words made such a deep impression on the mind of the poor inebriate that he could not shake them off; and after some time he attended a Temperance lecture, delivered by Mr. Armstrong, and signed the pledge. On the following Sabbath he went to class-meeting, stated that he felt his weakness, and expressed an earnest desire for an interest in the prayers of those present. Soon he obtained a sense of sins forgiven, regained his position in society, occupied an important place in the Church, and having faithfully witnessed for Christ for nine or ten years, passed through death triumphant home.

The secular press was largely occupied with copious details of this great revival; but the Rev. William Crook, jun., felt the need of a paper fully devoted to the cause of Evangelical religion, and in the strength of this conviction originated the *Irish Evangelist*, a monthly journal. It was a bold but characteristic venture, and the results justified his faith and courage. During the revival it attained a large circulation; for nearly a quarter of a century it continued to serve the cause of Evangelical truth and civil liberty, and only ceased to exist when the publication of the *Christian Advocate* as a weekly journal rendered its further issue unnecessary. The present generation scarcely realize how much

they are indebted to those who aided and encouraged this hazardous and spirited undertaking.

Glancing now at the work of Irish Methodism during the forty years just considered, it presents a record of glorious success in the midst of discouragements and difficulties almost without parallel. We find it shining with increasing lustre as a light in a dark place, bearing witness to the truth amidst abounding error, quickening the people into spiritual life, and preventing many districts of the country from being enveloped in the dense gloom of Romish ignorance and superstition. The life and vigour which characterized other Evangelical Churches were in no small degree traceable to its influence, and hundreds of their ministers received their first religious impressions from its ministry. The glorious Gospel of the grace of God was proclaimed not only in numerous places set apart for religious worship, but also in fairs and markets and in many a lowly farm-house, where there were but few assembled; and seeds of Divine truth were thus scattered that brought forth an abundant harvest. Education also was given in the daily and Sunday schools to tens of thousands, who were thus prepared to search the Scriptures for themselves and to occupy important positions in society.

The progress of Methodism was most marked. There was much useful legislation, systematizing the various departments of Christian work, and affording to the laity facilities for sharing in the administration of all financial business. In numbers the increase was truly marvellous. Although deprived by emigration of more than thirty-five thousand members, or about one hundred and forty thousand adherents, and in a country the population of which was reduced from upwards of eight millions to less than six, the membership rose from thirty-four thousand six hundred in 1819 to about forty thousand in 1859. Financial affairs showed a still more wonderful improvement. The Wesleyan Society alone, starting with a huge debt of £8,000, and an annual deficiency of £1,000, in what was practically the Sustentation Fund, not only paid off these liabilities, and raised nearly £30,000 in response to two other special appeals, but increased its annual subscriptions to the Connexional Funds from £1,887 to £8,780, and its allowances to ministers one hundred per cent. The number of Wesleyan preachers in the work rose from one hundred to one hundred and

thirty-seven, and of Primitive Wesleyans from forty to seventy. Not less cheering was the evidence of material progress, as about three hundred and fifty chapels were built, as well as a large number of school-houses and ministers' residences.

But the chief result of the labours of Irish Methodism was to be seen in other lands. In fact, it enriched and blessed the world, for in almost every place where the Society had an existence there could be found those who were indebted to Irish Methodism for their conversion; and no one who has not visited the British colonies and the United States, and seen it for himself, can form an idea of the vast extent to which Ireland has contributed to the numerical, financial, and moral strength of Methodism in those countries. Numerous Churches are to be found in which a large proportion of the congregations and nearly all the office-bearers are from this land; while in the United States, as well as in Canada, there are more Methodist ministers of Irish extraction, and considerably more members, than there are in Ireland.

Much, however, remains to be done. Perhaps there is no country in the world in which Popery holds such a firm grip of its votaries as in this land; and certainly there is none where it is more intolerant in its spirit, more arrogant in its pretensions, and more bitter in its hostility to the truth. Methodism is as much needed in the kingdom as ever it was. Its glorious mission is far from accomplished, and doubtless it is destined to achieve even greater victories. Whatever may be the course of political events, or the results of the agitation that now disturbs and distracts the nation, it is certain to issue in the triumph of the Gospel. Ireland will yet be won for Christ, and Popery must fall like Dagon before the ark of the Lord. The time is coming, and we believe it is hastening, when from north to south and from east to west the glad tidings of salvation will be proclaimed, and all will acknowledge not only the "one God," but also "the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Then shall Erin, redeemed and disenthralled, cast off the incubus which has so long depressed her energies, rise to the grandeur of her destiny, and prove a blessing to untold millions.

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